N. 7

Plain English.

A

SERMON

At St. *Mary-le-Bow*,

Reformation of Manners.

ADVERTISEMEN

WHereas the Reverend Incumbent St. Mary-le-Bow, (*whom I hon for his Worth*) *has desir'd an* A vertisement *to be Publish'd*; [This Ser was Preach'd to the Great Offence of the P nister of the Parish, and some of the Hear and is now Publish'd contrary to their Ju ment, and Friendly Admonition]: *I also fire the said Incumbent to prove any Falshood ther in Doctrine or Fact, and I shall readily tract it.*

April 1.

W

Plain English.

A

SERMON

Preached at

St. *Mary-le-Bow*,

On *Monday*, *March* 27. 1704.

FOR

Reformation of Manners.

With Some Enlargements.

By WILLIAM BISSET, *One of the Miniſters of St.* Catherine's *by the* Tower.

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PREFACE.

Little did I think this day Fortnight, ever to have crept out of my quiet beloved Obſcurity, to appear in Print, (having eſpecially no Dignity, not ſo much as M. A. *to Adorn a Title-Page,) ch leſs to become the Town-talk; of which (as a great happineſs) I ever had both a dread and abhorrence: t I hop'd to have ſtole a paſſage through the World, (as ave hitherto done,) to uſe the Words of our Admirable r.* Norris, *(whom I love to think and ſpeak after,)*

Like Subterraneous Streams, unheard, unknown.

t Providence has now call'd me (and I muſt not repine) ſuch a Service as has broke all thoſe Meaſures, and de me be taken up in the lips of talkers *(and as e would have it, though I hope moſt unjuſtly)* an In-ny of the People, *Ezek.* 36. 3. *I quickly foreſaw t this Undertaking would coſt me dear; that it would luce me to this uncomfortable* Dilemma, *this hard Choice, ther to be* Unfaithful to God, *or* Diſtaſtful to Man; *d what ſhould I do?* Decline it *I could not, and* Pre-ricate in it *I durſt not; leſt as God threatens* Jeremiah 17. I confound thee before them. *For how could I erely promote the great Work of Reformation then before ; and point out and remove (which was my profeſt ſign) the Obſtacles that lye in the way, and yet balk Three laſt Objections, (under which all the harſh Gra-g part comes in) when I knew in my Conſcience, (and the World knows) that thoſe are by far the greateſt* Re-ora's *to our Progreſs, and have done us more Miſchief n all the reſt together? Though at the ſame time, they ld not be touch'd upon without giving (as I knew they uld, and find they have,) great Offence:* But if I yet eaſed Men, I ſhould not be the Servant of Chriſt. *s plain I could have no Motive but Duty to God, and ſcharge of my Conſcience, to put me upon that which ſt needs procure me many and powerful Enemies, and volve me in numberleſs Troubles; but the beſt on't is, I*

have nothing in this World worth either Losing or Ke
ing; and my Life *in the Cause of* God *and Truth*
reckon better Lost *than* Kept.

It has been a long while to me Matter of Deep Conce
and Unfeigned Sorrow, to observe the Sacred Name of
Church *so vilely abus'd by* designing *or* debauched *M*
By the first, to kindle and foment Divisions and Jealou
between Protestants *of the same* Faith *and* Country,
this Critical Juncture; *when there is the most evi*
Necessity of the strictest Union against an Enemy, w
known Maxim is, Divide & Impera, *and whose m*
hope of Succes is to weaken us by home-bred Feuds, an
reduce us. On the other hand, by debauched *Men to op*
all Attempts for Reformation of Manners, *to render*
Godliness, *and Conscientious Walking, odious and contem*
tible under the Name of Phanaticism, *and to skreen t*
Vices and Malignity with the Veil of the Sanctuary,
give too much occasion for that unhappy Proverb,
nearer the Church, the further from God. *Now I d*
not slip so fair an Occasion as Providence had laid in
way, to detect their pernicious Practices, and set Thing
a true Light.

The only Cause of Disquiet I have, is that vain
groundless Suggestion, (which yet passes with many)
natural is that fear of Man which bringeth a Sna
that this may prove prejudicial to the Worthy Persons
gaged in the Societies: Tho' how that should be, I ca
imagine, after the Publick Declaration I made, that
were (except a very few) Strangers to my Person, an
to my Design; (which indeed no Mortal was privy to
ever saw or heard one Syllable before-hand of what I
delivered.) Now this Jealousy must suppose the Hei
of Tyranny and Unjustice in Persons of Power and A
rity, (beyond what I ever heard of in France) *to*
the Faults of the Preacher upon the innocent Hearers,
refuse to do their Office, or do it less faithfully, beca
have offended them.

However, to clear them from all manner of Susp
(lest the Guilt of Truth should lye at their doors) I
them this further Justice, to let the World know all

ſt before or ſince. On Saturday very late, the 18th ſtant, Three Gentlemen (of whom I knew Two by Sight, e Third was a Perfect Stranger) came to my Houſe, and ſired me to Preach the Reformation-Sermon on the 27th. ſuſpected then (what they have ſince told me,) That they d Fail'd elſewhere; (it ſeems) one whom they depended on as gone out of Town; and they try'd others in vain, at ſt (I wonder how it came into their heads) they pitch'd me. I objected the ſhortneſs of the warning, (having uch daily interruption upon the account of my Charge, it eing my Turn here for Attending.) But chiefly, what I ought would have brought me off; that I am not only bſcure, and ſo unfit for ſuch a Work (which had been nour'd by the Higheſt of our Function,) but alſo Ob-oxious, and not well-Thought of, by ſome in great Autho-ty, whom it was their Intereſt to Oblige. With all This deſired them to Acquaint their Principals, and try to get fitter Perſon; if not, to let me have Notice on Monday; d when I had conſider'd on it, and deſired direction of the nly Wiſe God, rather than they ſhould be without a Ser-on, I would undertake it. I did accordingly (upon their peated Deſire, Monday the 20th;) and it ſeems, have ll'd an old Houſe upon my Head. Thoſe who employ'd me ave been by far my ſevereſt Cenſurers: They have ever ce worri'd me without Mercy, loaded me with Reproaches, r'd me out with Cavils and Contradictions, and not given e one quiet day. I ſuppoſe what they have ſince ſaid nd done, could not be in the name of all the Societies, r I can hardly think, ſuch a Body of Men could be (One nd All) ſo Rude and Unreaſonable. 'Tis like, their Sen-iments (as well as others) may vary about me; and ſome y, He is a Good Man, others, Nay; but I've heard me ſay, He Deceiveth the People; for what I have id is notoriouſly True; and as to Fact, I am ready to make ath of every Syllable.

But Truth ('tis ſaid) is not to be ſpoken at all times. But, think this is the Time (if ever) to undeceive the World; hen we ſeem almoſt upon the Brink of Ruin, and nothing nder God) but the timely Opening of People's Eyes can revent it: And the Pulpit ſure is the moſt proper Place;

(wh-

(when God is concern'd, as he is in all this.) I have don
when I have answered these few Objections; which ar
all I can yet hear of.

Obj. 1. You have us'd a strange Freedom; and even
extreme Boldness.

Answ. I confess the Charge, and justify my self from
that Prayer of the Apostles, (whose Pattern sure we may
safely follow) Acts 4. 29. Grant unto thy servants, that
with all boldness they may speak thy word; and in
divers other Places of the Acts to the same effect.

Obj. 2. You have made several harsh Reflections upon ——

Answ. I charge none but the Guilty; those that are In-
nocent are no-wise concern'd. But if any conceive them-
selves injur'd; I reply with the Town-Clerk, Acts 19. 38.
The Law is open, and there are Deputies, let them
implead; or take what other Method of Redress they please.

Obj. 3. Some say you are mad; and it seems they have
the Authority of a Great Person for it; and sure no man
in his Senses would venture to speak the Truth so plainly at
this time of day. I answer (and if they won't believe me,
they may chuse) in the words of St. Paul, Acts 26. 25.
I am not mad, -- but speak forth the words of truth
and soberness.

Obj. 4. You are not serious enough. I have answer'd this
in the Sermon, I shall only add, Ridentem dicere verum
quid vetat? A Man may be merry and yet in good earnest;
and all who have been my Hearers these Twelve Years will
bear me Witness, that I never affected to seem odd and sin-
gular, nor to imitate them, Qui captant Hominum risum
Famamq; dicacis. Hor.

Qu. 5. Is it faithfully publish'd? Answ. It is accord-
ing to my Notes, with utmost exactness: there is a good deal
added that was prepar'd, and I had not time to deliver: but
nothing left out, except two or three short Passages, which
never were in my Notes: and nothing material alter'd, but
two or three Words at the Printer's desire.

Any one that pleases may come to me, and peruse my Notes
for fuller Satisfaction. I conclude the Preamble with this
hearty Prayer, That this small Treatise may, by the Bless-
sing of God, prove effectual. Acts 26. 18. To open Men's
Eyes, and to turn them from Darkness to Light, &

Plain English.

PSALM 94. 15.

But Judgment ſhall return unto Righteouſneſs, and all the upright in Heart ſhall follow it.

I Should think my ſelf a very ill Husband of my time (one Minute whereof I grudge to be diverted from the main Buſineſs of the Day) ſhould I employ it in calling a Conſult, much leſs in raiſing the whole Poſſe of Criticks, Scholiaſts, various Readings and Verſions, that Cloud of Witneſſes which often ſerve to darken the Text; tho' to make the Citers Learning and Reputation clear, and ſtart a Myſtery, or rather raiſe a Miſt where there was none before: At beſt they are like Winter Nights, bright perhaps and wholſom, but very Cold. Whereas we have warmer Work now before us, and I am very loath it ſhould Cool in my Hands.

I ſhall therefore content my ſelf with this plain, eaſie and obvious Senſe (which is generally the beſt) and call in no other help but ſome paralel Texts, (one Text of Scripture, being the beſt Key to open the meaning of another.)

But Judgment ſhall return unto Righteouſneſs. *i. e.* Juſtice ſhall begin once more to run in the right Channel, the former Obſtructions being happily remov'd, and as 'tis expreſt *Am.* 5. 24. *Judgment run down as Waters, and Righteouſneſs as a mighty ſtream.* And ſo like *Tigris* and *Euphrates* form one ſtrong and beautiful Current (" or place " of broad Rivers and Streams) bear down all Dams, and force its way through all reſiſtance; to the ſame effect is that expreſſion, Mat. 12. 20. *Till he ſend forth Judgment unto Victory, i. e.* to Triumph over Fraud, Lewdneſs, Injuſtice and Oppreſſion.

For it is not (we know) always thus: *Solomon* had ſeen, and ſo have I too; And I wiſh it be not ſo now, Eccleſ. 3. 16. *The place of Judgment, that Wickedneſs was there, and the place of Righteouſneſs, that Iniquity was there.* " That is, the very Foun- " dations of the Earth out of courſe, but now " they ſhould be eſtabliſht again upon their right " Baſis. I conceive the ſame thing to be intended, Pſal. 60. 4. *Thou haſt given a Banner to them that fear thee, that it may be diſplayed becauſe of the Truth. i. e.* God diſplays, as it were, his Royal Standard, and beats up for Volunteers; as in the Verſe after my Text, *Who will riſe up for me againſt the Evil-doers? &c.* And becauſe a taſte of Authority may perhaps be expected, Mr. *Weſley* in his Reformation Sermon upon this laſt Text, gives much

ch the ſame Explication; to whom as alſo for Context I refer you.

Well now, upon ſuch a bleſſed turn of Affairs, at Enſues? *All the upright in Heart ſhall follow i. e.* Every Sincere, Honeſt, Well-meaning riſtian, that has the true Love and fear of God, hoſe Heart God has *touched*, as 'tis ſaid of the nd that followed *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 10. 26.) ſhall obve and ſtrike in with this favourable juncture of ovidence (*For a Wiſe Mans Heart*, Eccleſ. 8. 5. *cerneth both Time and Judgment*) ſhall Liſt himf under the great Captain of our Salvation, and d an helping hand to ſet forward Reformation. *All the upright in Heart ſhall follow it.* Not at a ry diſtance, as St. *Peter* followed Chriſt, *Mat.* 58. afar off, unto the High-Prieſts Palace; d out of an Itch of Curioſity, to ſee the end: uch leſs as *Judas* followed, or rather dog'd him o the Garden to betray him. Not as *Neuters* ver about the Field of Battle, to ſee which e will prevail, and then to ſtrike in with the nquerors: or as the *French* while the *Engliſh* and *tch* Fleets were engag'd, to daſh one againſt the her, and make a Prey of both, (and there are me amongſt us that would play the ſame Game er again.) Nor as *Suttlers* follow the Camp to ke a penny; or as many of our Young Gallants, get a Name and ſomewhat to talk of. But to low it cloſe and in good earneſt, as a Lawyer uld follow a Fat Cauſe, or a Broker a gainful rgain, or an Hungry Courtier a good yielding ce, or ſome others their *Comfortable Importance*; to follow as to over-take, whatever it coſt us; e *Gideon*'s Men, Judg. 8. 4. *Faint, yet purſuing.*

To preſs at the ſame rate as St. *Paul* did toward th
Prize of his High Calling. *I ſo run, not as uncer*
tainly, ſo Fight I, not as one that beateth the Ai
this one thing I do, I follow after to apprehend, th
for which alſo I am apprehended of Chriſt. 'Tis fo
want of ſuch an Hearty Reſolution that we fail
at all: *Therefore is Judgment far from us,* Iſa. 59.
neither doth Juſtice overtake us.

This I conceive to be the Senſe of our Tex
However, if it ſhould not be the right, I am ſu
'tis a good one, and ſuch as the whole Tribe
Criticks cannot juſtly except againſt. Admittin
this to be the *Pſalmiſts* meaning, " I ſhall furth
" obſerve (what every one knows) that the Boo
" of *Pſalms* conſiſts of Praiſes, Prayers, or Proph
" ſies, but our Text is neither of the former, or
" the latter, and I think I may ſubjoyn in our S
viours words, (at leaſt in a qualified Senſe) *Lu*
4 21. *This Day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ea*
For if ſome ſharp-ſighted Perſons (as my Lo
Bacon for one) could in that Prophecy of *Dan*
12. 4. *Many ſhall run too and fro, and Knowled*
ſhall be increaſed, read the diſcovery of both t
Indies, the Uſe of the Compaſs, and other gre
improvements of Art and Knowledge in the N
tural World: I think we may as clearly and wi
leſs ſtraining of the words read in our Text, t
more valuable improvements this Laſt Age h
been bleſt with, (as an Antidote againſt its
bounding Rampant Iniquity) in the Moral Wor

Amongſt which your Societies (for 'tis pity
part them, they do ſweetly combine) moſt deſ
vedly lead the Van, as being the beſt *Virtuoſos*, t
True *Royal Society*, and to whom the World
incomp

comparably more oblig'd. And as far as my Acquaintance with Hiſtory reaches, I dare make that challenge to all *Gainſayers*, Job 8. 8. *Inquire I pray thee, of the former Ages, and prepare thy ſelf to ſearch of their Fathers*, and let them find me your fellows, in all reſpects, if they can; and I hope that prophetick Bleſſing belongs to you, *ver.* before, *Tho' your beginning was ſmall, yet your latter end ſhall greatly increaſe. And though you are but of Yeſterday*, ver. 9. you may be well laid in the Ballance againſt all that numerous Fry and Rabble of Fraternities, which *Rome* that Fruitful Mother of Fornications has pawn'd theſe Thouſand Years: Not excepting her laſt and darling Brood (and I hope 'twill prove her laſt, that ſhe's paſt Bearing, and God has *given her a Miſcarrying Womb and dry Breaſts*) thoſe who impudently call themſelves the Society of *Jeſus*, as who ſhould ſay, *Truly our Fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus.* But we may boldly appeal to himſelf, if they do not foully belye him, in thoſe words after our Text, *ver.* 20. *Shall the Throne of Iniquity have Fellowſhip with Thee which frameth Miſchief by a Law?* 'Twould be a greater Miracle then all that are aſcrib'd to *Xavier Acoſta*, and the whole Order of them to reconcile thoſe *Leopards*, *Tygers* and *Aſps* with the Lamb of God, " the Meek and Lowly Jeſus. And if they are like him in any thing, 'tis in that one Inſtance, but in a far different Senſe, *Luke* 12. 49. *I am come to ſend Fire on the Earth*, and what care they if it be already kindled? If all Chriſtendom be in a Flame, ſo the Tares of the Northern Hereſie be but burnt up, and the Incendiaries can make their Fortunes in the General Combuſtion.

But ye have not so Learned Christ : your Princi-ples and Practices are as opposite to theirs as Light to Darkness; nay, as *Christ* to *Belial*: your De-sign so Generous and Disinterested, so manifestly Calculated for the Publick Good, at your own great Expence, both of Labour and Treasure, and even hazard of your Lives; that Malice it self knows not where to fasten, and is almost forc't to fall down before you, and confess that *God is in you of a Truth.* But to clear my self of the Charge of Flattery, I appeal to the Account the Reverend Dr. *Kennet*, and your fast Friend Dr. *Woodward* have given of your Successes at Home, and Hon-ourable Testimonies from Abroad; in which they have done you, and *but* done you Justice; and lest any suspect me of a design upon you, I suppose 'tis well known you are no Corporation (and I am a-fraid never will be) and have no Livings or Digni-ties in your Disposal, nor do you ever give (that I hear of) any Salary, or so much as a Scarse to your Chaplains. But perhaps I may take that Freedom with you " in the sequel of this Discourse, as shall leave no suspition of Flattery or Self-ends. In which I shall observe this easie and unaffected Me-thod.

First, To prove this Great, and Unquestionable Obligation, *When Judgment returns to Righteous-ness, for all the upright in Heart to follow it.*

Secondly, To lay down some necessary Rules and Cautions whereby ye may strive Lawfully, and so obtain the Masteries.

Thirdly, What will be the main Business and Burthen of the Day; to answer Objections (which none yet have done so fully as might be wish't) and

under

under this Head our main Arguments will Naturally fall in, and appear in their beſt Light and Strength, when the Objections are ſet as a foil againſt them.

Laſtly, If my Time, and your Patience, be not quite ſpent, I ſhall cloſe up all with a brief Exhortation.

For 'tis fair to let you know before-hand that I ſhall conſiderably exceed the uſual Time: For I may ſay with *Elihu*, *Job* 32. 18. *I am full of Matter, the Spirit within me conſtraineth me; I will ſpeak that I may be refreſhed.* I have a great deal to ſay to you, and I ſhall ſcarce ever have ſuch another Opportunity to meet you all together again. The Caſe is extraordinary, and ſo perhaps is the Meſſage wherewith I am charg'd. We ſeem upon our laſt Legs, and Meaſures muſt be concerted to retrieve our Loſſes, or we muſt think of laying down our Arms: And perhaps I may have ſomewhat conſiderable to offer, (which cannot be done in an hurry); and if you can have the Patience to hear me out, (for the main of my Meſſage I ſhall reſerve to the laſt) you may ſee reaſon to confeſs that your Time was not miſpent: But this I promiſe, by God's aſſiſtance, to ſay as much in as few words as is poſſible; for Senſe will lye cloſe, and I hate to multiply words without cauſe, eſpecially before ſuch Auditors, knowing *that the Kingdom of God is not in Word but in Power.*

But I hope there is little need of ſuch Apologies to you *Gentlemen of the Reformation* (for with you properly my Buſineſs is); for beſides that, theſe Sermons have by conſent a Diſpenſation from the uſual narrow reſtraints, (they have I know

among our *Diſſenting Brethren*; *and I am not aſhamed to call them Brethren*, and I hope you are not; two Hours being allow'd by them, and 'tis but enough, for ſo weighty a Task); and I know no Canon but Cuſtom (which may be diſpens'd with upon ſpecial Occaſions) againſt a long Sermon even in the Church. Beſides, I ſuppoſe you have a larger ſtock of Patience than common Hearers (and I wiſh 'twere the greateſt trial of your Patience you are like to meet with, by putting your Hand to God's Plough, to ſuffer this Word of Exhortation ſomewhat longer than ordinary). "Though even that's a ſore Penance with "moſt, and many of thoſe you are to deal with "had as lieu you ſhould keep them as long in the "Stocks; and perhaps it would be a proper and "effectual Puniſhment in ſome caſes to make "them *ſuffer* a Sermon, as a Work-houſe, ſome "think, would awe Rogues more effectually than "the Gallows. But your Spirits, I perſwade myſelf, are not wound up juſt to three quarters. Where by the way I cannot but reſent the unfair *treaty of partition* between *Chriſt* and *Belial*: three Hours are too ſhort to hear the *Devils Buffoons*, (five Hours I have known my ſelf in the Days of my Vanity) whereas three quarters of an Hour are thought too long an *Audience* for the *Ambaſſadors of Chriſt*.

But I am perſwaded *better things of you*; *nay I know the proof of you*, (having try'd your Patience this way more than once) that you are no Starters, nor ſo conformable to the Mode of the Times, as to ſhew your Watches every other Minute, and cry, O! *what a wearineſs it is!* Whe

will this long-winded Parſon have done! If you were of this Spirit you'd have made but a ſorry Court of Aſſiſtants at *Ezra*'s Reformation, when they ſtay'd from Morning to Noon (ſix long Hours) in the open Air about this Work, and were withal wet to the Skin; for we find them *Ezra* 10. 9. *trembling becauſe of this matter, and for the great Rain.*

But as for the reſt, who either drop'd in by Chance, or came out of Cuſtom or Curioſity, or *to ſpy out our Liberty that we have in the Lord*, or perhaps it may be they know not why themſelves: they have the ſame freedom here as in the Devil's Chappel, to ſtay as few or as many Acts as they pleaſe; and when they have heard as much as ſerves their turn, or ſomething they do not like, or think it may be Change or Dinner-time, they are free to be gone; and as they came unſent and unlook'd for, ſo they may *depart not deſir'd*; and the only Remark I ſhall make is that 1 *John* 2. 19. *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us*, &c.

Having thus ſettled the Preliminaries to make all Parties eaſie, (who may ſtay as long or as ſhort a time as they pleaſe) I ſhall now proceed to the firſt Head, which will not require much to be ſaid of it, becauſe it is of the number of thoſe Propoſitions, which by manifeſtation of the Truth commend themſelves to every ones Conſcience in the ſight of God; and I never affect to demonſtrate Day light, eſpecially when ſo many, by divers ſtrong and invincible Proofs, have done it already.

The

The little I ſhall ſay may be reduc'd under thoſe two common places, Duty and Intereſt; for I never chooſe to go out of the beaten Road, unleſs it be for better way, or to ſave ground.

1. Then, 'Tis the Duty of every ſincere Chriſtian to lend an helping hand in ſetting forward the Work of Reformation. *Curſe ye Meroz*, Judg. 5. 23. has been ſo often look'd on as a Trumpet of Sedition, that I dare not found it, though for the help of the Lord not againſt the *Mighty* (for then it might look Seditiouſly) but againſt the *Beaſts of the People*. I ſhall rather obſerve how unkindly God took it at the *Tekoites* hands, and has recorded it to their laſting Reproach, *Neh.* 3. 5. *That their Nobles put not their necks to the work of the Lord.* Few conſider what a Crime it is to be cold and unconcern'd in their Maker's Quarrel, and how highly the jealous God will reſent it. If *Plato* would allow none to ſtand Neuters in his Common-wealth, and when the Houſes divide all muſt file off to the Yea's or No's; (Ay, but they may ſtep out, you'll ſay, and ſlink a Vote; ſo may you too, if you can altogether go out of the World;) no wonder if he who has told us, *we are not our own*, has alſo declar'd, *he that is not with me is againſt me*, and wiſhes we were either *hot or cold*. He cannot wave his right in us, nor conſent to be rob'd. *Mal.* 1. 6. *A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Maſter; if then I be a Father, where is mine honour?* &c. What an undutiful, nay unnatural, Son muſt that be, who can patiently ſee his Father outrag'd and inſulted, when Natural Affection overcame Nature it ſelf, and dumb *Atys* could find a Tongue in his Father's Defence?

Nay,

Nay, there is not barely Duty, but Neceſſity in the Caſe. All the upright in Heart *ſhall* follow it. The Love of Chriſt conſtrains them; *and Love is ſtrong as Death, the Coals thereof are as Coals of Fire, which hath a moſt vehement Flame. Cant.* 8. 6. To talk of an upright Heart, and not true to and zealous for God, is a Lye all over. If our Hearts be *ſound in his Statutes*, we cannot ſee them violated and trampled under Foot, without expreſſing the utmoſt Reſentment; when Rivers of Tears ran down the Royal Prophet's Eyes, becauſe Men kept not God's Laws. But if he were then a King, God might have ſaid to him as he did to *Joſhua* in a like Caſe, *Joſh.* 7. 10. *Get thee up: Wherefore lieſt thou thus upon thy Face? Iſrael hath ſinned and tranſgreſſed my Covenant*, &c.

Indeed our low'd Tongue Sins demand Supplies,
More from Briareus *Hands than* Argus *Eyes.*

Mourn with *Jeremy* in ſecret places for their Pride and other Spiritual Sins, but make them ſuffer in publick places for their open Lewdneſs and Profaneneſs. Wherefore elſe ſerveth the Law? Was it not added becauſe of Tranſgreſſions.

But 2. Duty is but a feeble Argument with moſt; Intereſt is the Nail that will drive, and if you can once make Men ſenſible of that, you have gain'd your Point. As to their Eternal Intereſt 'tis the Object of Faith, *and all Men have not Faith*; nay, few in ſuch a degree as to conceive aright of the amazing Powers of the World to come. Tell the Men of this World of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light; they are of the Car-

Cardinal's Mind, *that had rather loſe his part in* Paradiſe, *than his part in* Paris. *Glorious things are ſpoken of thee thou City of God.* Ay, 'tis a fine place, they'll ſay, when you are there; but they had rather ſee ſomething on this ſide the Grave. I will not therefore to ſuch uſe that Motive, *Iſa.* 33. 17. *Thine Eyes ſhall ſee the King in his Beauty: They ſhall behold the Land that is very far off*; but rather try what that other will do, *ver.* 20. *Look upon Zion the City of our Solemnities: Thine Eyes ſhall ſee Jeruſalem a quiet Habitation*, &c. Is it no Happineſs to engage the moſt High to be our Defence? To have Peace within our Walls, and Plenteouſneſs within our Palaces? Read but the 144th *Pſalm*, and then I doubt not, you will heartily join in the Chorus, *ver. ult. Happy is that People that is in ſuch a caſe*, &c. But what's all this, will the narrow ſelf-ended Worldling ſay to me? Let the World go how 'twill I ſhall fare as the reſt. Prove that 'tis *mine* Intereſt, *mine* in particular, or you ſay juſt nothing. Is it your Intereſt to have Highway-men, Houſe-breakers, Shop-lifters ſuppreſs'd? That 'tis without doubt; for elſe there would be no living one by another, and no Man could call any thing his own. But what is't to me if others whore, and drink, and ſwear, and play the Devil? The worſt is their own, I ſhan't be accountable for them. *Cains* and *Gallios* anſwer right, *Acts* 18. 15. *If it be a queſtion of words, and names, and of your Law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of ſuch matters*: Yet he had the Grace (which I wiſh ſome of our Magiſtrates had) to think that not only *Wrong* but *wicked Lewdneſs* too belong'd to his cognizance.

Well

Well then I'll ſhew you how 'tis *your* Intereſt. Could you be content to have your own Wives and Daughters debauch'd, it may be ("after the "*French* faſhion) forc'd before your Eyes? Would you have your Sons lewd by Sixteen? and bring Pox and Rottenneſs into your Houſes? No ſure. When it comes ſo near Home, you'll be ſenſible of the Danger. But if Luſt have the Reins, and may range without controul, it will not be confin'd to the common Cattle, but attempt the Chaſtity of Maids and Matrons; and no Vertue almoſt will be ſafe. If things had gone on as they were once a going, Chaſtity, "perhaps by this "time, had been a Scandal, and modeſt Women for Signs and Wonders, and Whores, Pimps and Stallions, had carried the World before them: And I may ſay with ſtricteſt Truth, *Iſa.* 1. 9. *Except the Lord of Hoſts had left unto us a very ſmall remnant*; but *I hope now he will multiply them that they ſhall not be few, and glorifie them alſo and they ſhall not be ſmall*, Jer. 30. 19. *we ſhould have been as Sodom, and we ſhould have been like unto Gomorrah.*

But what have we to do, they'll ſay, with other Mens Drinking? Why beſides that, if Drunkenneſs get the Sway, they will put the *Bottle to your Noſe*, and force you to be as very Beaſts as themſelves; (to that paſs were things come within the Memory of Man) are you content to be outrag'd in the Streets, and aſſaulted by every furious Beaſt; as I was my ſelf, but this day Se'nnight, ſiez'd by a Sot even before it was dark, and had much ado to make him ungrapple; (for give them but Licenſe and we ſhall have Noon-day Devils:)

Devils:) Though neither will you be ſafe in your own Houſes, unleſs you can be content to have your Reſt diſturb'd, your Windows broken, it may be your Houſes fir'd too by Midnight Scowrers, and (what is very common) your Officers and Watchmen wounded and ſlain.

Once more; What Harm will others Swearing do me? Why ſhould I *make a Man an Offender for a word*, when it does me no manner of Miſchief? I Anſwer; If you have any Conſcience, or Love to God, 'twill be *bitter as Death*, to have your Ears grated with that Language of Fiends; to paſs through ſuch Volleys of Hell-ſhot. Beſides that, it makes all Buſineſs and Converſation uneaſie by an endleſs neceſſity of Checks and Reproof. But though you make no Conſcience of any ſuch matter; have you a mind to be ſworn out of your Rights, your Eſtates, nay your very Lives, by Knights of the Poſt? And how do ye think they arrive at that Dignity? but by paſſing the wonted Trials, performing their Exerciſe, and learning firſt to ſwear the Compaſs. Profane Swearing is the direct Road to Perjury, and has made way for ſuch Juries and Evidence, as would take away the honeſteſt Man's Life in the Kingdom, if the Court pleaſes but to ſend Direction. For when once the Reverence of an Oath is loſt, 'tis not the place that will make it ſolemn, or ſtrike a ſufficient Awe upon the Soul, (eſpecially in that ſlight careleſs manner 'tis adminiſtred in our Courts); and therefore *Solomon* rightly oppoſeth him that ſweareth, to him that feareth an Oath, *Eccl.* 9. 2.

Thus

Thus much of the first Head, *viz.* the Obliga-
n: I shall now lay down some Cautionary Rules,
d be upon each as brief as I can.

1. Then, be sure you, that engage in this gene-
us Design, be publick-Spirited; free from all
le Ends and Interests; and addicted to no Par-
or Faction whatsoever: but *Catholicks* in the
est Sense. The most Famous *Party-Man* is not
for a pitcht Battle, or a general Assault; as our
siness is fitly describ'd, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. *Pulling down*
trong-holds, casting down Imaginations, and every
h thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge
God, and bringing into Captivity every thought to
Obedience of Christ. If you belong to a certain
of Men, you'l go no further with us, then your
y lies in common; and when they part you'l
e us the Go-by. Such Factious Reformers are
e the mixt Multitude that came out of *Egypt*,
o soon fell a Lusting, and then a murmuring.
like *Davids* Band in the Wilderness, made up
a medley of Debtors, Male-Contents, Fugitives,
Malefactors; who not only mutini'd about the
il; but were ready to knock their own Leader
h' Head. To all such Reformers, I may truly
, *ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of*;
east ye are not of a Spirit fit for our turn. Let
ur name be Christians; your Religion Charity,
of a pure Heart and good Conscience, and
th unfeigned: And take in all that love the
rd Jesus in Sincerity. One Lord, one Faith,
l make us all of one Heart, one Mind, and one
uth. For my part, I dare no more confine the
urch (as some would have us do) between *Do-*
and *Berwick*, then between *Venice* and *Cadiz*;

within

within one Protestant Country, then St. *Peter's* Patrimony; nor dare I limit Grace any more to this or that Way, or Opinion among Christians, then to this or that Stature or Complexion. Our Business is to promote the Glory of God, and the general Interest of the Gospel; not to seek our own no nor the things of our Party; but those things which are Jesus Christ's: And *as many as walk by this Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy as on the Israel of God.*

2. *Cease ye from Man whose Breath is in his Nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Isa. 2. ult. Fear not their Faces, Court not their Favour, hold not their Persons in Admiration; and especially be not ashamed of their Reproaches. Consider the Charge, *Isa.* 51. 12. *I, even I am he that comforteth you: Who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid of a Man that shall Dye, and of the Son of Man that shall be made as Grass; and forgetteth the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, &c.* Remember the Cause is Gods, and he will not be beholding to his Creature for his Dues. I am afraid this has been one great hindrance to your Progress; if it have not brought a blast upon your endeavours; that you have trusted too much to the Arm of Flesh, *Jer.* 17. 5. And expected great matters from publick Countenance, and Persons of Place, and Figure in the World. 'Tis well if you can have it; but God can do his Work without, and rather chooses so to do, *that no Flesh may glory in his sight.* What need you cringe and sue for that which you may boldly demand: If your Houses are broke, or but your Pockets pick'd you'l require what redress the Law will afford;

you are rob'd upon the Road, you'll go to the next *Juſtice*, and oblige him to take your Oath of what you have loſt: And when God is rob'd, wrong'd or outrag'd, muſt you beg of them to do their Office? Humbly wait their *Worſhips* Leiſure; and thank them, if they'll be ſo civil as not to be Perjur'd? Be as humble for your ſelves as you pleaſe; but be ſtout for God. Dare not to debaſe the Dignity of the moſt High; for 'tis more than you can anſwer. I hope, Gentlemen, you are no *Millenaries*; nor look for that *Golden Age* on Earth (at leaſt not in *your* time) when *all our Officers ſhall be Peace*, (or even our *Juſtices of Peace*) *and our Exactors Righteouſneſs*: If ſo, *your Eyes will fail in looking for your vain help. Surely*, Pſal. 62. 9. *Men of low degree are Vanity, and Men of high degree a Lye. Magiſtrates* will often be falſe to their Truſt, their God, their Prince. But if they deny Juſtice, or delay or trifle, appeal to their *Superiours*, and bring the perjur'd Knaves to account; and though they too are corrupt, yet you may make *Satan* caſt out *Satan* in ſpight of himſelf: At laſt you can bring it before the higheſt Court of Judicature, the *Houſe of Lords*; and I am verily perſwaded they'll do you Right. You need not be beholding to *Mortals*, much leſs to *Malignants*: You ſpend upon your own Stock; and I'm afraid there will never be a Fund aſſign'd you (though 'tis highly reaſonable) out of the Publick Revenue: And I hope you look for no Places, or Preferments; if you do, you may happen to be foully deceiv'd; and like the Troops of *Tema*, Job 6. 20. *Be confounded becauſe ye had hoped.* Let this be your *Motto*, Pſal. 7. 10. *Our*

defence is of God, which saveth the upright in Heart. This your *Prayer*, Psal. 60. 11. *Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of Man. Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our Enemies.*

But 3. Though you must be *stout*, take great heed of being *hot*. Remember *the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God:* He will not be serv'd by sinful Passions; and *we are Men of like Passions* with others, and need to watch, lest they get the mastery; for if they do, the whole Work is mar'd. That's a true Remark of Mr. *Wesley*'s, *'Tis perhaps one of the hardest things in the World to be zealous and not passionate.* Now Passion (if it prevail to a great degree) will make it a *blind Zeal*, though the Cause be never so good: for Reason and Passion cannot have *free course* together. 'Tis true of the Passionate as well as the Ignorant, *John* 11. 10. *But if a Man walk in the night he stumbleth, because there is no Light in him:* Nay, if it rise to the heigth of Fury, 'twill make you not only blind, but mad; and God may truly say as *Achish*, 1 Sam. 21. 15. *Have I need of mad Men*, &c. For *Ira furor brevis est*, Wrath is a meer Fit of Phrenzy; and one mad Man is not fit to manage another. Though *Madness* (as *Solomon* says) *is in their Hearts*, whom you would reform, they may stop your Mouths with that of *Horace*, *O major tandem parcas insane minori*, Pray greater Bedlam let the less alone. There is another guise force than Passion to stem this impetuous Torrent; *viz.* the *Spirit of Power and Might:* And 'tis this God has pitch'd on, *Isa.* 59. 19. *When the Enemy shall*

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ſhall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord ſhall lift up a ſtandard againſt him.

4. Remember *you have need of Patience.* As *Chriſt hath ſuffer'd for us in the Fleſh,* 1 Pet. 4. 1. Suffer'd *the contradiction of Sinners againſt himſelf*; ſuffer'd all the furious Aſſaults of Men, and Devils: *Arm your ſelves with the like mind, and endure hardneſs as good Soldiers of his.* Think not of Disbanding, or lying long in Quarters of Refreſhment. *Peace* there can be none, nor *Truce* long together; *for we wreſtle not with Fleſh and Blood* (only) *but with Principalities and Powers*; but Heaven remember will pay for all. God has bleſs'd you with ſome, with conſiderable Succeſs; and I may ſay as he, 2 *Chron.* 25. 19. *Lo! thou haſt ſmitten the Edomites, and thine Heart lifteth thee up*; (but I truſt *your Hearts like* Jehoſaphat's, 2 Chron. 17. 6. *are lift up in the ways of the Lord*); you have made ſome thouſands of ſcandalous Offenders publick Examples; you have ſuppreſs'd perhaps ſome hundreds of lewd Houſes, and brought others into better order: So far is well: But ſtill remember, there's Work enough cut out for you. There are two ſtrong *Cittadels* that ſtill hold out againſt you; I mean, thoſe two famous *Academies* of Hell, thoſe *Nurſeries* of all Vice, thoſe *incorrigible Brothels*, the two Play-houſes; *where Satan's ſeat is*; where he keeps his *head-quarters*; whence he can at any time draw forth freſh Supplies, and form in a manner what Parties he pleaſes; and whence he ſends out *Detachments* every *Campaign*, (or rather, to ſpeak in the *Jeſuit*'s Language, thoſe famous *Comedians*) he makes his *Miſſions* every Summer to the two *Univerſities*,

to train up our Youth in *their* Liberal Arts and Sciences. And they have, let me tell you Gentlemen, a good hearty Friend in one of them, and as hearty an Enemy of yours, who will readily lend them his Intereſt, and afford them not only Reception, but Countenance too. Now to think the Work of Reformation can go ſmoothly on while theſe are in being, is as vain as to ſuppoſe this City may continue in perfect Peace, though the *Tower* and the *Savoy* were Garriſon'd with *French*. Theſe are left as the *Canaanites in the Land*, Numb. 33. 55. *to be pricks in your Eyes*, (an Eye-ſore they are, I am ſure, to every pious Soul) *and thorns in your Sides*; and theſe, I am confident, *hate to be reform'd*.

I know not what the *Maſter of the Revels* may do, (for to *him* I find they are ſent to be *tutor'd*) *he* may poſſibly teach them better Manners than all the *Divines*, *Juries* and *Judges*, that have taken them to Task; becauſe *he* acts *as one having Authority*: And therefore pray, Gentlemen, if you can, get him into your *Society*, and he may do us *Knight-ſervice*. Let us however pluck up a good Heart, and hope the beſt ſtill; who knows (for *Miracles* are not quite ceas'd, witneſs the Souldier that was ſtruck blind t'other day in the *Tower*:) but the *Players* may turn *Reformers* too; and the *Stage* (as Mr. *Denny* would have us hope) vye with the *Pulpit* for Piety, and Morality. But 'till this Miraculous Vertue be poured forth, *to turn the Hearts of the Diſobedient to the Wiſdom of the Juſt*; theſe *Sons of Zerviah*, or rather, *Children of Belial*, or the *Spirit that worketh in thoſe Children of Diſobedience*, would be too hard for you, had we

we not ſome ground of hope *to overcome them*: 1 John 4. 4. *Becauſe greater is he that is in you than he that is in the World.*

Therefore 5. and laſtly, *Put on the whole Armour of God, the Armour of Righteouſneſs on the right-hand, and on the left; that ye may be able to ſtand in the evil day, and having done all to ſtand:* Being thus appointed ye are all over invulnerable, and conſequently invincible. *Examine your ſelves whether ye be in the Faith*; look well to your State, look well to your Ways; ſet up the Worſhip of God in your Houſes; and *with all diligence keep your Heart, from whence are the iſſues of Life.* Have a great care *to cut off occaſion from them that ſeek occaſion* to *reproach* you; *leſt wherein ye glory, ye be found even as they.* If you allow your ſelves in any known Sin, 'twill quite turn the edge of your Reſolution. A ſecret Shame will ſo reſtrain you, that you'll be *as a mighty Man aſtonied, as one that cannot find his hands*; at leaſt, cannot find in his Heart *to condemn* and puniſh that *in another, which in himſelf he allows.* But if it be known, (as out it will come ſooner or later; *for there is nothing covered*, Matth. 10. 28. *that ſhall not be revealed, and hid that ſhall not be known.*) O! how will they triumph and inſult! What proud Boaſtings will they make! If a vicious Reformer ſhould light on ſuch a ſharp Strumpet, as *Laronia* in *Juvenal*, (we have many ſuch witty *Jilts* in this *lewd Town*) how might ſhe play upon him at the ſame nettling rate, as ſhe upon the *Stoical* Hypocrite! *Felicia ſæcula quæ te Moribus, &c.* Bleſſed Days when ſuch as you ſet up for Reformers! Now let the Town ſtand in Awe; another *Cato* is drop'd down from

Heaven; but pray Sir, what Lady was that you pickt up t'other Day? *Ne pudeat dominum monſtraſſe Tabernæ*, and if I may be ſo bold, what's the Man's Name of the *Tavern* whither you carried her? However if you do not meet with ſuch pointed *Satyr*, a much blunter reproof will pierce deep enough. *They will ſurely ſay to you this Proverb; Phyſician heal thy ſelf*; begin at Home, and then 'tis time enough to look Abroad. 'Tis but a ſorry Character at the beſt, *to be the Keepers of others Vineyards, when your own Vineyard ye have not kept*, and I'm ſure you will ne're make 'em believe that 'tis Love to their Souls, ſets you on work, when you ſhew no more to your own. Thoſe were ſtrains of *Heroick Charity* in *Moſes* and St. *Paul* which you can hardly reach, and much harder poſſeſs the World with the belief of: that you could be content to have your *Names* (as the one, *Exod.* 32. 32.) *blotted out of the book* of God: or *wiſh your ſelves accurſed from Chriſt* (as the other) *for your Brethren, ſo they may be Saved.*

I come now *Thirdly* to the laſt Head; *viz.* The Objections, which is a *Topick* ſcarce toucht upon by any that I know of, but the Learned Dr. *Kennet*, and therefore to ſave time, I ſhall paſs by all thoſe which he has Anſwered, becauſe he has done it ſo fully, that it cannot (I think) be mended, at leaſt not by me. As, 1*ſt*. Your being Voluntary *Societies*, and in that reſpect dangerous Combinations. 2*dly*, Being ſet a work by a *Pragmatical medling* Humour. 3*dly*, The invidious Name of *Informer*. 4*thly*, That it has prov'd in great meaſure *ineffectual*. For Anſwer to all which I refer you to his *excellent* Sermon: Only the laſt

have ſomething to ſay to, becauſe the Caſe is ſince onſiderably alter'd.

But here Gentlemen, I hope ye can bear plain-Dealing, (for this is not a time and place to *dawb*) if not, I muſt tell you, y've miſtook your Man; for 'tis the only Talent I can pretend to. But that you may ſee ye have not only *plain*, but *fair* Dealing too; that like the *Cevennois*, I neither *give*, or *take* Quarter: I ſhall begin with *my ſelf*, and have an Eye upon my own Heart all the way.

1*ſt*, Then, the Queſtion may juſtly be put; Do you practice what you Preach? Do you make Conſcience to inform againſt *Evil-doers* your ſelf? Otherwiſe you are like the *Lawyers*, *Luke* 11. 46. *Who lade Men with Burdens grievous to be born, and touch not the Burdens with one of their Fingers*; Or like Cowardly *Commanders*, that put their Men in the very Mouth of Danger, but keep themſelves out of *Gun-ſhot*. This I muſt needs own is an *home-thruſt*; to put it by were not fair; and 'tis somewhat hard to receive it. Wherefore without any doubling I ſhall return a diſtinct Anſwer, and plainly *declare the thing as it is*.

I have return'd ſeveral of my own Charge for *Scandalous Immoralities* to the *Spiritual Court*; but nothing was done only ſome Money ſqueez'd out of them. But as to the *Civil Magiſtrate*, which I take to be the Senſe of the Objection; I confeſs I have not. My *Reaſons* are theſe; Whether they be found I leave you to judge. 1. My own Hearts, I thought it not proper to exaſperate by ſuch rough Methods, leſt it beget in them an invincible Prejudice, and ſo defeat the ends of my Miniſtry: Otherwiſe had I no more occaſion for an Intereſt in

their Affections then you; I ſhould matter no more their Reſentments, or Reproaches, then the whiſling of the Wind. 2. As to other Scandalous Perſons; Charity 'tis like may incline you to believe my Communication with ſuch is but tranſient and occaſional. And I conceive it unbecoming the Meſſengers of the *Prince of Peace* to ſeize and hale them to the *Magiſtrate*, unleſs there were a proper *Officer* at hand, and in that caſe I ſhould make no ſcruple about it. Now it is my practice to reprove all *Swearers*, *Drunkards*, &c. more ſharply, or mildly as the Caſe, or the Condition of the Party requires: unleſs, ſometimes (which I reckon amongſt my *Preſumptious* Sins, and I pray God *lay them not to my charge)* I have been daunted, and over-aw'd by the Big Looks and Pompous Appearance of mighty Sinners, and ſenſual *Wickedneſs in High Places.* But theſe Reaſons (I confeſs) have not ſatisfied my Conſcience; and therefore I have tender'd my Service to ſome of your *Society*, to bear them Company at any time (but they thought not fit to accept it) when they go out in Parties to attack the common Enemy; an Office which I could as Heartily embrace as *Micah*'s *Levite* did the *Children of Dans* invitation, *Judges* 18. to go with them to their *New Conqueſts*, and I think it an higher Poſt of Honour, tho' without Pay, then to be *Chaplain of the Guards*, or a more Honourable Body.

I have Anſwered as well as I could for my ſelf, tho' under Correction if I am out, and with an Hearty deſire of being better informed. Now Gentlemen comes your turn, and let us conſider what is ſaid againſt you, and what may be pleaded in your Defence. 1. Then

1. Then it is Objected, that ſuppoſing your Deſign to be Good and Laudable, yet you began at the *wrong End*, and you might have had the Manners to have ſtaid till your Betters led the way; that it did not become Perſons in your private Capacity to appear ſo forward, at leaſt without a *Patent* from the *Higher Powers.*

This is laid to your Charge: Now hear what I Anſwer in your Defence: (for you muſt know I am your *Councel*, tho' not Learned in the *Law*, nor much in any thing elſe, and tho' you never gave me, nor would I have taken it, ſo much as a *retaining Fee*). Admitting the Charge that you began at the *wrong end.* I reply, what then? So you purſue right ends, and do no Body wrong, and take no ones Buſineſs out of their Hands, that are not willing to let it go; and ſo you aim at the Glory of God, the Good of your own and others Souls, and the true Honour and Welfare of your Country; which every Chriſtian has an undoubted right to promote.

I further alledge (*for I have uſed Similitudes*) that a Fire began to break out in an Houſe, and a charitable Neighbour ſpying it firſt, haſtens up with Water to quench it, whether the Owner (much more a paſſer by) would bid him come down, becauſe he had no right, or becauſe he got up on the wrong ſide, or becauſe his Houſe was *Insured*, and it belong to the *Cuiraſſiers* of the *Inſurance Office*, and not to him to take care about it: And that the Alluſion is not Foreign to the matter in hand, appears from that paſſage, *Iſa.* 9.18. *For Wickedneſs burneth as the Fire*; in *Sodoms* caſe it was literally true, and 'tis God's Mercy it has not been ours. For, *Can a Man*, Prov. 6. 27. *take*

Fire

Fire in his Boſom, and his Cloaths not be burnt? Can one go upon hot Coals, and his Feet not be burnt? Now I conceive it not ſeaſonable at ſuch a juncture to ſtand upon *Ceremonies*, but that every one ſhould ſet the beſt Foot foremoſt, and do what he can to prevent the threatning Miſchief. Beſides, if the wrong end did ſet out firſt, the right end may overtake it, if it pleaſe; and I ſuppoſe if we are once agreed upon the Work, there will be no diſpute about precedence, and we ſhall not ſtick *to give them the right Hand of Fellowſhip.* I further ſay for you that this Objection comes now too late, whatever force it might once have had, it is now quite caſt out of Doors, for ſince your happy ſetting out, our *late King of truly Glorious Memory, Her Preſent Majeſty, all the Lords Spiritual*, many of the *Temporal*, with the *Judges* and others in Places of Authority have not barely owned you, but Headed you too. To ſum up all; we (for now I have pretty well cleared you, I'le venture to caſt in my Lot with you) have the Head, the Hands and the Feet, and if the *ſlow Bellies* will not come up with us, we heartily wiſh they may mend their pace, otherwiſe ſome People will be apt to ſay (and we cannot rule their Tongues) that they ſerve not the *Lord Jeſus*, but their own ungodly Gut.

But 3*dly*, here ariſes another Objection, for we are fallen into thoſe *Evil-days*, wherein *the Clouds return after the Rain*, one Cavil upon the Neck of another, but this comes from a different Quarter, the Parties whom we would reform. They deſire to ſee your Commiſſion whereby you are empower'd *to compel them to come in*; *the Kingdom of Heaven* (they ſay) *ſuffers violence*, but *offers* none: and

becauſe

cauſe I would not do them ſo much wrong, as weaken their Argument by ill-wording it, I'le ve it you in one of their own phraſes; [What ill you take me, (ſaid one) and carry me to Hea- n upon your Back whether I will or no?] Now e ſtreſs of this Argument bears upon the ſame oot with the *Toleration*, *viz. Liberty of Conſcience*: d they take this rudeneſs, Gentlemen, the worſe *your* Hands, becauſe it is preſum'd that moſt of ou are for the *Toleration*, and ſome of you *ed* it; and why can't you be ſo Civil to do as ou would be done by, and give what you take? r it is not reaſonable that People ſhould go their wn *pace* as well as their own *way* to Heaven? ow they are for ſoft and fair, to halt, and ſome- mes turn out and Drink, (and it may be Whore) the way: But you Gentlemen *Jehu-like* are for *iving ſo furiouſly*, that (they ſay) 'twould break eir very Hearts to keep pace with you. They n't *pull* you *back*, and why ſhould you *puſh* them : Now I grant if this laſt Clauſe were exactly ue, there would be ſomething in what they ſay. But if they don't pull us back I am ſure they *ſtle* us cruelly, and would fain if they could trip our Heels. Beſides 'tis not our own Cauſe that e Plead. For we hope *our Foot ſtandeth in an even ace*, that we have got pretty ſure Footing, and it affes the skill of ſuch Whifflers to ſupplant us. ut we are concern'd, *leaſt that which is Lame be rned out of the way*; and they ſhan't (if we can lp it) like the Fat Cattle, *Ezek.* 34. 21. *thruſt th Side and with Shoulder, and puſh all the Diſeaſ- with their Horns, till they have ſcattered them a- oad.* Our fear is leſt they lay a *ſtumbling-block, an occaſion of falling in their weak Brethrens way*;

and

and ſo through their Sin and Folly, and the Scand
ariſing from thence, thoſe Souls ſhould *periſh f*
which Chriſt died. We grant 'tis in their Powe
to do what they will with their own: and we don
go about (nor indeed can we) to hinder them
They may be as ſecretly Wicked, Lewd, an
Worldly as they pleaſe; we won't force the
(they need not fear it) to an Heavenly Mind, muc
leſs to Heaven againſt their liking. But we woul
oblige them (if poſſible) to be Civil upon Earth
and let their Neighbours *live* by them *a quiet an*
peaceable Life in all Godlineſs and Honeſty. To Con
clude, tho' they will not bear us Company, no
mend their pace, we'll make them if we can, ſtan
a little out of the way, that others may have roo
under them to go, and *that their Footſteps ſlip not.*

To this I may add 4*thly*, *Julian the Apoſtate'*
Famous Objection; and we'll lend it to the Partie
before-mentioned, if it will help their Cauſe, o
do them any manner of Service. When the Chri
ſtians came to him for Juſtice, and Redreſs of thei
Wrongs, he us'd to tell them, Sirs, your Maſte
ſet you another Leſſon, *Not to reſiſt Evil*; but *who*
ſoever ſhall ſmite you on the right Cheek to turn to hi
the other alſo, and if any Man take away your Coa
to let him have your Cloak alſo. And our Objector
may draw much the ſame Inference as he did; Doe
it become you to tug, and contend with your Neigh
bours, and make them better then they have a min
to be? This is the Doctrine of 48; founding Do
minion in Grace, and *ſuch Honour have all his Saint*
Conſider we muſt each of us have our turn: Your
is to come; *The Righteous ſhall have Dominion i*
the Morning, but they that are Lewd, and *they tha*
are Drunk are Drunk in the Night, and you'l gra

ſo much, that *this is our Hour and Power of Darkneſs.* And if we are (as you ſay) *the Men of the World, who have our Portion in this Life*: Why ould you *who are not of the World, whoſe Citizenip and Converſation is in Heaven*, ſet up for Conollers, and give us Laws in our own Country?

As to the firſt part of the Objection, I Anſwer, his were ſtraining *Paſſive Obedience* a Peg higher en it was ever ſet yet. 'Tis time enough of Conience to ſuffer, when Providence has brought us ſuch a Condition; and then we hope God will ve us ſuch a meaſure of Patience, that we ſhall ot ſhrink from nor ſink under it. But to ſuffer hen we need not, is a Work of *Supererogation*, d *Voluntary Humility*, which we Proteſtants never mitted. As to giving you Laws in your own erritories, we give you none; but only oblige u to keep your own Laws; thoſe to which you ve either actually, or virtually conſented in Perı, Parents or by Proxy, and by which you hold your *Liberties*, *Rights* and *Properties*; or elſe might be as very *Slaves* as the *French*.

But 5. It is objected by the ſame Perſons, that if eſe *Knights-Reformers* go on at this rate, and *cut all Evil-doers*, as they give out they will, *from the ty of the Lord*, and *pluck up every Plant that their eavenly Father has not planted*, we are like to have ine World of it indeed. We ſhall all become *Puriıs*, we ſhall have *Preſbytery come in like a Flood*, hich is as bad as the *overflowing of Ungodlineſs*, and ntimes worſe (in ſome Mens account) than a *dege of Popery*. Beſides we ſhall be nothing like the ſt of the World, (*toto diviſos orbe Britannos* ined); and as diſtant from others in Cuſtoms as in ituation. What, no Whoring, Swearing, Drinking,

ing, Gaming, *&c.*? What a dull place would the Earth be if things come to this pass? We had as lief they should shut us up in a Cloyster, or condemn us to *Purgatory*. Instead of coming up to the Standard of the Age the *Beaus Esprits*, the gay well-bred, polite victorious People o' t'other side the *Channel*, we shall become like our poor, sneaking, beggarly Northern Neighbours o' t'other side the *Tweed*; that is as a late *Oracle* of *our Law* term'd it,(and I suppose some of you may have heard it from his Bawling Mouth) *Sniveling Saints*. And if the Gentlemen at St. *Germains*, with their *Young Master*, should honour us with a Visit(as there are many who labour Night and Day to clear the Passage,and prepare the Way for him) *they*, *not to say you*, *will be asham'd* to find how the Nation is degenerate from what their *Old Master* left it.We were then a towardly promising People, almost debauch'd to a perfect ripeness for *Popery* and *Slavery*, and now (*quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore!*) relaps'd into the old lumpish Phlegmatick Spirit of *Godliness* and *Morality*.

To draw this Objection to a Point, that we may see the whole force of it together: the design of it is to fright you with the formidable Bug-bear of *Phanaticism*: But I hope you have more Wit than to be so easily scar'd or banter'd out of your Reason and Christianity. For supposing this Charge were true, (as it is altogether false and malicious) there's no such mighty matter in it; (for the Sound is more frightful far than the Sense). A *Phanatick* signifies no more than a *Mad-man*, and that's neither a Sin nor a Scandal, not a quarter so bad as a Rakehell or a Reprobate. Besides, you'll have good honourable Company of all Ages; *Hos.* 9. 7. *The Prophet is a fool, the spiritual Man is mad.* Nay,a wiser than they

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r *Solomon* either, even our Great Master, in whom re hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowedge, was not only in the *Jews* account a *Phanatick*, ut a *Demoniack* too, *John* 10.20. *And many of them aid, He hath a Devil and is mad, why hear ye him?* t. *Paul* no sooner came over from the *Pharisees*, but e became a *Phanatick*; and *Festus* was of Opinion hat his *Pharisaical Notions* were the cause of it, *Acts* 6.24. and *Festus* said with a loud voice, *Paul thou rt besides thy self: Much Learning doth make thee nad.* Lastly, all the *Apostles* turn'd *Phanaticks* at a lap, and that by those very means (see how *Doctors* iffer) as the *Jews* then concluded, which our Gentlemen would prescribe us, as the surest Antidote o keep us sound, *viz. Drinking* and *good Fellowship*; nd no wonder when *this was noised abroad, the multitude came together* from all quarters (and I fancy ome of our highest *Catholicks*, that most abhor a *Conventicle*, could dispense with it upon the same erms) to get their Mornings-draught amongst them. Nay, to come nearer home; *Archbishop Usher*, the Glory of our Church, was often scorn'd as a *Puriian*, (for *Phanatick* is a term of the latest Edition,) nd our *late excellent Primate* was stil'd (as I have eard) by a mighty Man of Law, *A Phanatick in Lawn-sleeves.* And *our present worthy Prelates*, and *rue* Fathers of the Church, are frequently revil'd y their very dutiful and obedient Children at the ame Civil and Christian rate. Nay, tho' you were s *stanch* as Dr. *Hammond*, as *high* as Arch-Bishop *Laud*, while you are zealous for God, and espouse is Cause, you shall be sure meet with the same Language; and therefore look for no fairer quarter t their Hands. But let this be your Consolation, which *Musculus* often apply'd to himself when

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ſcorn'd and reproach'd for his Zeal, *Si inſanimus Deo, &c. if we are beſides our ſelves, alias*, if we are *Phanaticks, it is to God.*

There is one Objection more from your Enemies Quarters, which I muſt not paſs in ſilence (though ſcarce worth mentioning) leſt I ſhould ſeem to lay my Thumb upon what I do not like; and that is concerning *ſtrange Villanies* practic'd by you, or thoſe whom you imploy; as if innocent Perſons had been circumvented, trick'd, trepan'd, and moleſted with malicious Proſecutions. I take this to be wholly the *forgery* of the *Father* of *Lies*, for it *bears his Image and Superſcription* exact. For my part I never heard but one blind Story, from a Perſon of Figure indeed, but greatly diſaffected to you, without naming Time, Place, Perſons, or any other Circumſtance; whence I preſently concluded there was nothing in it: Wherefore I ſhall ſet this Objection aſide (for I think 'twill keep cold) till I hear it made; or leave it to others who do know, for I know nothing of any ſuch Matter.

I have now done with your Enemies till I hear further from them: I come now in the laſt place (and then I ſhall have done with you too) to the Objections of Neuters, or half or falſe Friends, who thus ſhew Cauſe why they don't come in, and increaſe your Numbers.

1. Then ſay ſome, I love to live private, and am not for making a Noiſe and Buſtle in the World. I Anſwer, If it be *Fame* you are afraid of, ne're trouble your Heads about that, for you will get no Renown (in this World at leaſt) by ſuch Adventures, take my Word for't. But the Buſtle I don't like; *i. e.* if you would ſpeak plain, and if not, we know your meaning;

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ve my own Eaſe, and am for no coſtly, pain-
l, or troubleſome Duties; but would (if poſ-
ble) go to Heaven in a Featherbed. You are
uch in the right on't, and do ſo by all means
you can; *for men will praiſe ye when you do well*
your ſelves. But I very much doubt *this hope*
ill make you Aſham'd; and therefore 'twere better to
ear in time, leſt a Promiſe being left of entring into
at Reſt which remaineth for the People of God,
u ſhould any ways ſeem to come ſhort of it. For
ey that die in the Lord reſt from their labours, and
eir works follow them, Rev. 14. 13.

But 2*dly*, Say others yet better Affected; You
ave our good Wiſhes; Our Hearts are with
ou. And pray, why not your Hands? Tho'
ſent in Body, we are preſent in Spirit. And
ay, why not in Both? *If your Heart be divided*
w ſhall ye be found Faulty, or at leaſt Tardy.
ut to diſcover the weakneſs of this Plea, apply
but to other Duties, and then ſee how it will
ld, (for this I think I have prov'd to be a Du-
, and a firſt-rate Duty.) We are Well-Wiſh-
s to the Word, but *pray have us excus'd*, we
n't well afford to be *Hearers*, much leſs *Doers*
it. We are Well-Wiſhers to Prayer, but we
ve not While or Zeal to Attend it. I am
th you ſhould try, becauſe 'twould be a dan-
rous Experiment if it fail, Whether *Good*
iſhes without *Good Works* will bring you to
eaven.

But 3*dly*, Say others, who are yet farther Ad-
nc'd, and not *far from the Kingdom of God*,
ou have our Hearts, our Prayers, nay, our Pur-
s too, according to our Ability. This I think

may paſs for Women, Aged, Sick, or Impotent Perſons. For it comes up to that Rule of Acceptance, *Where there is a willing mind, it is accepted,* (2 Cor. 8. 12.) *according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* But if you are fit for Service, (as you are bound, or I am mightily miſtaken, *to glorify God in your Body and Spirit which are His*) and if you are not, we won't take you in; Pray let us have your Perſons too for indeed we want Hands, and muſt pray you as the *Man of* Macedonia *did St.* Paul, Act. 16. *Come over and help us.* Were our Companies Compleat, we ſhould not perhaps be in ſuch haſte for Recruits: But the Miſchief on't is, the Devil (like the *French*) carries all by Numbers; and 'tis hard with an Handful to maintain our Lines much more to take the Field againſt him who Attacks with Hundreds of Thouſands.

But 4*thly*, Even this ſtarts another Objection (and I am bound in Conſcience to anſwer it as fully as I can, becauſe 'tis one of my own ſtarting,) You have given us here (may the fearful and unbelieving ſay) a very formidable account of the preſent poſture of Affairs and we have no Might nor Heart againſt the great Multitude; ſuch Intelligence is enough to make, *Ezek.* 7. 17. *all hands feeble, and all knees weak as water*: And to tell you the Truth We have not Courage enough to face ſuch a Foe: And if we are Cowards, 'tis not wholly our fault; for who can help natural Temper and Complexion? If indeed we undertook to command Fleets or Armies, Cowardice were a Crime and the Daſtard in that caſe is a Traytor and

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Villain: But we never pretended to Feats of Chivalty, and dare not ſet out for *Knights-Errant* (For ſo Gentlemen, I ſuppoſe you have heard the Sparks of the Town call you; know to your comfort, that you are Dubb'd for your Service, and the Honour of Knighthood is a preſent Reward:) Beſides, we have a Diſcharge to produce, under the Hand and Seal of the *Lord of Hoſts* Himſelf, even from an *Holy War*, from *coming to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty*, Deut. 20. 8. The Officers that ſpeak unto the People, and ſay, What Man is there that is Fearful and Faint-Hearted? let him go and return to his Houſe, leſt his Brethren's Heart Faint as well as his Heart.

There is a great deal, I muſt needs own, in this Objection; for indeed this is a *Trying Time*, I mean in a *Military Senſe*, (as the Word is us'd when they ſay, *Tryers of the Guards*,) that is, an Hectoring time; ſuch as the *Pſalmiſt* ſeems to deſcribe in the 55*th Pſal.* which made him *Wiſh he had wings like a Dove, to haſten his eſcape; for I have ſeen* v. 9. *violences and ſtrife in the City, day and night they go about it*, &c. Bullying is come to ſuch a deſperate heighth, that an Honeſt Man dares not ſpeak a manifeſt Truth, nor diſcharge a neceſſary Duty, but he ſhall be dogg'd by *Ruffians*; and by a baſe ſecret Revenge Knockt o' th' Head, or Wounded and Maim'd. *England* abounds now with *Italian Bravo's*; and what does it ſignify that we have Laws to ſecure us from open Oppreſſion, if Peoples Mouths muſt be ſtopp'd, and their Hands ty'd up even from their Duty, for fear of Clandeſtine Violence, and

Aſſaſſination: and we cannot ſerve God or our Country, but we muſt have the Fate of *Sir John Coventry* before our Eyes. 'Tis like you may have heard the Story; however being ſhort, and much to our purpoſe, 'tis worth while to relate it. There was a Motion made in the *Lower-Houſe*, to ſweep thoſe Peſtilent Vermin the Players out of their Kennel: The *Court-Party* oppos'd it, pleading their Merits, and what conſiderable Service they had done the *Crown*, (I ſuppoſe ſome had Fought *for King* Charles *the firſt*.) This unhappy Gentleman ſtarts a Scurvy Queſtion, Whether the *Actors or the Actreſſes* had been ſo Serviceable to the Crown? But it coſt him dear; for going ſoon after by the *Horſe-Guards* in his Coach, he was ſtopp'd and drag'd in, ('twas thought his Throat was deſign'd to be cut) but upon ſecond Thoughts, they only Slit his Noſe; I ſuppoſe, to ſpoil his Speech for the future, that having ſuch a Defect, he might the rather learn to keep his Tongue within his Teeth: And 'tis likely, the *Tryers of the Guards* were ordained for this end; that they might have none but ſuch harden'd thorough-pac'd Bravoes, as would boggle at nothing on this ſide Hell. See here a Sample of *French Diſcipline*, and as you like it, be fond of it. Now if we adviſe with Fleſh and Blood upon ſuch matters, it will ſuggeſt that wary *Maxim*, *Am.* 5. 13. *Therefore the prudent ſhall keep ſilence in that time, for it is an evil time*; the *Devil* now by his Crew *goes about like a roaring Lion*, to fright Men out of their Duty. For beſides that the *Players* who ſet the *Queen's-Arms* on their Scandalous Bills, and ſubſcribe themſelves, (it may be

be in Complement, as we do in our Letters,) Her Majeſty's Servants; are (as all the World knows) both *Stallions* and *Hectors* by their Calling, (and ſure they have not the *Royal Authority* for that too.) The Soldiers who are maintain'd with the Nation's Money for our Defence, are the Terror of Her Majeſties beſt Subjects. The Martyrs of your Society (for Martyrs they are, as good as any in the *Rubrick*; and *their death as precious in the ſight of the Lord*, as even St. *Stephen's*, who was too in a manner Mobb'd,) were Murther'd by thoſe Sons of-Violence, thoſe *rough Caterpillars*, Jer. 51. 27. Who are only *skilful to deſtroy*.

A Neighbour of mine (who is one of you) ſhew'd me not long ſince a *formal Declaration* of War, ſent him by a Soldier, whom he had inform'd againſt for Swearing; (tho' 'twas much in a private Sentinel, and ſomewhat more honourable than the *French Hector's* practice) to declare before he began Hoſtilities; the Style was remarkable (whether drawn up by a Secretary of War, or the Clerk of the Regiment, I know not; but thus it run, [*Thou Immortal Informing Dog, thy Days are Number'd, I'll ſurely be the death of thee.*] Are not we, Gentlemen, come to a fine paſs, when a Subject dares not keep the Laws for fear of theſe Fiends? I have liv'd ſome while as it were in the Mouth of 'em, and Fought with Beaſts (as St. *Paul* at *Epheſus*) almoſt theſe Four Years, and ſhould know ſomewhat of *the men, and their Communication*; They Swear and Curſe as duly as they Speak; they ſcour the Streets at all Hours of the Night; Protect the Whores;

Insult, Abuse, and sometimes Murther the Watch; and what can be done with them? Their Officers claim the Cognizance of the Case, and truly their *Discipline* is just as good as that at *Doctors-Commons*; and no wonder, for the Commanders are many of them more Debauch'd and Prophane than their Men. For though I have often heard of *Reformades* and *Reformed Officers*, yet I never once heard of *Reformers* amongst them; nor as long as I have been Acquainted with you, did I ever see any of that Cloath; nor indeed, many of my own in your *Societies*.

But all this is no News, for Soldiers and Blades of the Town to be Hectors; but so general is the Contagion of late, that Magistrates, Gentlemen of the Long Robe, Physicians, nay, and Ministers are Bullies too; as if they strove who should be foremost in the *French* Mode, to please their *new-expected Masters*. Is it not a burning Shame in a *Christian*, a *Reformed* Kingdom, (what *Pagan Rome* would have blush'd at, and *Cato* or *Tully* have cry'd, *O Tempora, O Mores,*) That a Son of Violence, a Notorious Bully, should sit in one of our highest Courts of Justice, in an Office so nearly related to the *Crown* and the *Peace*, (as it were to brave the Nation, and bid them expect Justice there, if they dare,) after having so insolently broke the Peace, contemn'd the Laws, and defi'd the Crown, by Challenging, Abusing, Assaulting, and Outraging, and that in *Westminster-Hall*, within sight of so many Courts of Justice,) one of the worthiest Gentlemen for Learning, Piety, and true Bravery, that this Age can boast of, a *Mem-*

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ber of Parliament, and what is more Honourable in the ſight of God, an active and very valuable Member of your *Societies*; Becauſe he durſt not defy God and the Government, and go the *ſhortest Way* to Hell; or perhaps, becauſe he did not underſtand a Sword ſo well as himſelf. It is not unlikely he, or Ruffians for him, may ſerve me ſo too: But I thank God I am *Bully-Proof*, and fear no *Hectors*, by what Name or Title ſoever dignifi'd or diſtinguiſh'd.

Hence we may ſee there is ſtill abundant cauſe for that Charge from God, *Joſh.* 1. 7. *Only be thou very courageous, that thou may'ſt obſerve to do according to all the Law*, &c. When to keep the *Law* is as much as a man's Life is *worth*.

But ſtill this is no juſt Excuſe for Cowardice in the diſcharge of our Duty, but only ſhews the Neceſſity of Courage; which is to be had as well as Wiſdom, or any other Grace, for asking. And St. *Paul* who had ſo often paſt the Pikes, declares, *I can do all things*, Phil. 4. 13. *through Chriſt which Strengtheneth me*. Otherwiſe it would be very hard for the *Fearful* to be put into that Black Liſt, or rather dead Warrant, *Rev.* 21. 8. eſpecially ſince *being ſtout-hearted* commonly makes men *far from righteouſneſs*.

But after all, the Trial is not ſo fierce and fiery as ſome may fancy; theſe bluſtering Blades are nothing near *ſo terrible as an Army with Banners*; nor do their *big ſwelling Words* ſound ſo loud as a Cannon, or a Mortar. And if it ſhould be your Lot to be preſs'd or trepann'd (as ſome have been, for there's Tricks in all Trades) into the Fleet or Army, you muſt have far greater

Terrors ſet in array againſt you: Which, yet ſome voluntarily encounter for a vain Notion of Honour; and others for Eight-pence a day: But the Captain of your Salvation will give you otherguiſe Pay and Preferment. Beſides, *who is he that ſhall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* The Devil is an arrant Coward; face him, and he flees, and all his Vaſſals are like him: Sin is weak as Water; and Guilt will *tremble at the Sound of a ſhaken Leaf; and the wicked flee when none purſues.* They are ſturdy Rebels indeed againſt God, but meer Slaves to Man; and *thro' fear of death, are all their life-time ſubject to bondage.* They know, if they dye in the Fray, they are damn'd; as a great Dueller frankly confeſs'd to me, That he never enter'd the Devil's Liſts, (which he had often done) but with this full Perſwaſion; that if he loſt his Life, his Soul was undone for ever. Only Confidence in his Skill, and the fear of being Poſted, (and as his Expreſſion was, Piſs'd on) (perhaps with the help of Brandy or Opium) buoy'd up his Spirits from ſinking. So that their Bravery is indeed nothing elſe but a baſer ſort of Fear, or Cowardice in another Dreſs.

But if God ſhould honour you with the laying down your Lives in this Glorious Cauſe: If *to you it ſhould be given*, (and a ſignal Favour it is) not only, to *ſtrive againſt ſin*, but to *reſiſt unto blood*; (the Rules before laid down, as to your State and Life, being firſt obſerv'd) I can upon better warrant paſs my word, than one is ſaid to have done to the Soldiers in the *Weſt*, My Soul for yours, ye ſhall be with Chriſt the ſame day in

Paradiſe; and with the noble Army of Martyrs, praiſe him for ever.

But now *5thly*, comes an Objection that requires Courage on my part, (and I bleſs God, he has given it me) for I foreſee it will diſturb a *Waſp's-Neſt*, and I expect to have them buzzing toward the Door; but yet I cannot baulk it, without injury to God and Truth. For when we exhort ſome People to be zealouſly affected in this good Matter, they cannot deny the Goodneſs of it; but they are (it ſeems) pre-engag'd. A civil Anſwer, and ſatisfactory too, if it were found: Their Zeal is all beſpoke, and they have none to ſpare for this Service; becauſe it is all taken up already for the Church; and they muſt not have too many Irons in the Fire, leſt ſome of them cool. But ſure the Church may ſtay a little, till God is ſerv'd; for after Him is Manners; ſuppoſing both Intereſts could not be carried on together.

Now the Stumbling-block that theſe Gentlemen ſeem to ſtart at, is your Name of *Reformers*; and I could almoſt wiſh (but now 'tis too late to change it) that you had pitch'd upon ſome other, as *Amenders*; or that *Iſa.* 58. 12. *Reſtorers of paths to dwell in*; this had been as proper as any; for truly there had been no Place for Piety, no Living in the World, if ſome ſuch Courſe had not been taken. The Name of *Reformation*, they apprehend, threatens the Church, becauſe it made ſuch a Change in it an Age and a Half ago; and they fear, we intend ſome new Alterations. Whereas, God knows, we think it enough (and more than we can compaſs) to reform

form the Streets, the Markets, the Taverns, and especially the Play-Houſes; and ſure none of theſe are *Holy Ground*. I would not be miſtaken (but I greatly fear I ſhall,) A true hearty Friend of the *Church*, I entirely love and honour: But it provokes me beyond all patience, and *'tis enough to make even a wiſe man mad*, to hear a Company of Miſcreants, as wicked almoſt as the Devil could wiſh to have them; not only *uſurp*, but *engroſs* the Church, as if it were their *Encloſure*, and all beſides were *Heathen Men and Publicans*, *whereas they ſay, they are* Jews, *and are not*; *but do lye, and really belong to the Synagogue of Satan*; and care not a ruſh, if all the *Churches* in Town were in the State of 62, St. *Pauls*, and the Abbey not excepted; ſo their *Two Cathedrals*, in *Drury-lane* and *Lincolns-Inn-Fields*, were but ſafe; the Sweet Singers and Anthems of which, charm them ſtill more, and raiſe a briſker Devotion, than all the *Quires* in *Chriſtendom*.

I would not have you think, that I ſpeak here *without Book*, tho' I preach without Notes. For I have met with this Anſwer both in Town and Country, again and again; when I have reprov'd Sots, Swearers, *&c.* (eſpecially when they have been Mellow, or rather Maudlin, as they call it;) I am for the *Church*; I love the *Church* at my Heart. Whether they mean it, by way of Privilege, that they have a *Church-Licence* for their Crimes; or by way of Atonement, that this their Zeal makes an amends for their Misdemeanors, I never ſtood to enquire: But ſuch Impudence, I confeſs, puts me to a Non plus; and all the Reply I can make, is, I

ſo

rry for it; but whilſt you are ſuch *unruly Mem-*
rs, the *Church* (if I know any thing of Her Mind)
d rather have your Room than your Company.
ow I love at my Soul to uncaſe an Hypocrite,
nd am content, if I prove ſuch, to be ſerv'd ſo
y ſelf) eſpecially ſuch bold brazen Hypocrites,
ho would face the World down againſt all Senſe
d Reaſon, and even Matter of Fact, that they
, or can love any *Church* at all. *Haters of God,*
d *Lovers of the Church,* one would think were a
ddle, if not a Contradiction; and yet 'tis an
ceeding common caſe now-a-days. Therefore
proceed to enquire what they mean by the
urch; but this touches upon a Sore, and they
eſently grow ſour or ſullen; and I could ne-
r yet ſee any of theſe Gentlemen Maſters of
much Temper, as to give a Man a Civil An-
er, or let one into their Meaning; and I hope
s Publick Query may procure another *Letter*
m the Living to the Living, by their Principal
cretary, or ſome abler Hand to clear up the
int for the World's ſatisfaction. For their
urch hitherto, and the *Atheiſts Nature,* are ἄῤῥητα
ἄλαλα; *Words unutterable,* Terms too high to be
plained, Subjects that can neither be ſeen, felt,
ard, nor underſtood; and unleſs they will de-
e their *Shibboleth* or (if they were not pro-
'd Enemies to canting, of all things in the
orld) I could find in my heart to call it their
t, we muſt be left in the dark, and know not
w to follow them, though we would never ſo
n: For if the Word be ambiguous, and *the*
mpet give an uncertain Sound, who can prepare
ſelf to the Battel. But to give them their due;

I ne-

I never hear the *Church* of God or Chriſt, here they are wondrous tender of taking thoſe Sacred Names in vain; though in other Diſcourſe they make one Word in five; no, nor the *Proteſtant* or *Reformed Church*, but only the *Church*; it may be the Church of *Preſtor-John*, or the *Mufti*, for any account we can get from them.

Wherefore, ſuppoſing they mean the *Church of England*, let us proceed to pick out their Senſe by the beſt Light we have, till they'll be pleas'd to afford us a better. I have ſo much Charity for them, as to conclude, they cannot be ſo groſs in their Notions, as to look no farther than the Walls and the Glebe; though ſome too are ſottiſh enough to ſtick even here. Well then, do they mean by the *Church*, the Heads or Rulers of it (as we commonly mean when we ſay the *Government*); God be prais'd, it was never better headed, thoſe Chairs never better fill'd ſince *England* was a Nation; and God grant they may never be worſe, and no Sober Man (I believe) will complain: But theſe Gentlemen are quite of another mind, and what they ſay of their *Spiritual Fathers*, is too well known, and unfit for this place. Well then, to proceed, do they mean by the Church, the *Articles of Religion*? (that's the uſual Standard to judge of Church by), *viz.* the Confeſſion of their Faith? No, theſe will not do. There are four or five of them, and amongſt the reſt one terrible long one (as long as four others) with a Name almoſt as unſizable as *Latitudinarianiſm*, which look too much *Geneva-ward*, to ſuit the *Genius* of our ſuperfine improved *Armenian* Age. Our Hone

For

Forefathers the Biſhops and Dignitaries at the *Synod of Dort*, condemned the *Arminian* Tenets as manifeſt Errors; and our Parliament in 1627, or thereabouts, complain'd of the increaſe of *Papiſts* and *Arminians*, among their Grievances, or the growing Evils of the Age, which called for ſpeedy redreſs: But *Tempora Mutantur, &c.* our New Church-Champion (if I don't miſtake him) can ſee no Reaſon why the *Scriptures* ſhould not be taken in an *Arminian* Senſe: We are ſorry for that, but can't help it, only we pray that God would bleſs his Eyeſight. To proceed in our Queſt. Do they mean by the *Church* the *Canons* or *Homilies*; (theſe our Gentlemen know juſt as much of, as the *Twelve Tables* at *Rome*, or the *Laws* of the *Medes* and *Perſians*) not one of the Laity in Ten, has ever ſeen them, and ſcarce one in Five Hundred has Read them through; and if they had, they would find the Doctrine of the one too Sound and Old-faſhion'd, and the Diſcipline of the other, too ſtrict and preciſe for their turn; and we ſhould quickly have them in another Tune. Well then; is it the *Liturgy* (for there is nothing elſe left to ſerve for their Standard) Alas! this has too much of Scripture, too many *Pſalms* and *Leſſons* for their nice Palates, and muſt be dreſs'd, and diſht up with exquiſite Muſick to make it go down with them. And as much as they pretend to admire it, (for 'tis all over Pretence) they very ſeldom come at it; (but that may be, leſt too much familiarity breed Contempt, and becauſe Admiration is beſt kept up at a diſtance.) One of theſe *Zealots*, who *ſeem'd to be a Pillar*, could not-

withſtand-

withſtanding his great Reſpect (if the World has not wrong'd him) in the midſt of his Devotion, (ſure it was not a ſudden Rapture of Divine Love) turn the moſt excellent part of it into a Leud, Blaſphemous Jeſt; And I'll undertake you may find theſe Bleſſed *Churchmen*, five times at a Play, and ten times at a Tavern, for once at Divine Service. I ſuppoſe you know the New Diſtinction, ('tis a nice one, and ſuch as *Scotus* and *Aquinas* with all their Subtilty could never hit on:) *Of the Church*, and *For the Church*. One comes conſtantly to Church, Morning and Afternoon: he is *with us*, but yet againſt us, or not heartily for us; another comes once in a Moon, and then it may be, half Drunk; and ſmells ſtrong of Brandy no one can ſit near him; and ſo takes up the Room of two better than himſelf: this is all the Church gets by him, and yet he is Violently *for the Church*; and *Hic vir, hic eſt*, this is the Man for their Turn, eſpecially for two Sermons a Day. Indeed to be too conſtant, and ſerious in all its Ordinances, is with them an ill ſign, it has a *Phanatic Aſpect*, and if they would venture to ſpeak out, this is the ſenſe at the bottom: He drives the Point too far, he's *in Good Earneſt* for the *Church*; he's a Dangerous Perſon.

To Sum up our Evidence; theſe Gentlemen's *Churchſhip* is not to be found in the Book of *Articles*, of *Canons*, of *Homilies*, nor of *Common Prayer*, nor in any Book that I know of, but what I never could ſee, nor can ſay any thing to, but *Book of Sports*. Yes, there's one Book all of *Canonical*, and with them the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*

ruth; the Author of it came to an ill End, but *s End was according to his Works*; for the Devil d never a more Serviceable Tool; and that is *udibras*; one *Canto* of which in their Account, worth all the *Cant of St.* Pauls *Epiſtles*; and ve known ſome, who were Train'd up for hampions, have got every Line of *Hudibras* by eart before they could ſay one *Chapter of the ible*, or yet Read it perhaps as far as *Exodus*. And o wonder if it were had in ſuch high eſteem, hen a Defender of the Faith declared at the ouncil-Table, it was the beſt Book that ever as Printed; and yet I think the *Bible* had then aſs'd the Preſs.

To conclude, The Scrutiny of a *Church-man* is ade now-a-days by a few upſtart, paultry erms, and Uſages, of which, with my beſt yes, I never could ſee the leaſt hint, or men-on in all the *Canons*, *Rubrick*, *Rituals*, nor any Pub-k Authentick Inſtrument of the *Church* what-ever (and I think I am reaſonably well Read them all:) And the whole World knows we hold o *unwritten Traditions*; but uſe this as one of our eſt Pleas againſt the *Papiſts*, that we deal above-oard, and let every one fairly ſee in Black and hite to what they muſt Conform. Now theſe ew Marks of Church-Membership, which ſerve *Teſts* or *Criterions* to find out a Phanatick Wolf Sheeps Cloathing, are theſe which follow.

1. To call the Communion-Table an *Altar*, hich ſuppoſes a Sacrifice; and I never heard any outward Sacrifice among Chriſtians, but at of the *Maſs*.

2. Con-

2. Conformably to this term, to make a profound Reverence or Congee to, or toward it; which by the way, is far more reaſonable in the *Church of Rome*, for they have ſomething to Plead in its Defence: *viz.* that they have their God before them in the *Pix*, as a preſent Object of their Devotion. I have been very Inquiſitive about the true *Riſe*, and *Reaſon* of this Practice; but *how*, or *when* it came up, I could never get an Account, nor indeed any other but this, from the moſt Learned and Judicious of my Acquaintance; that 'tis a *Laudable* Cuſtom.

3. To turn their Faces toward the *Eaſt* when they repeat the Creed, (and many, when they perform other parts of their Devotion,) for which the only Precedents I can meet with, are thoſe Twenty five Men, whom the Prophet *Ezekiel* caught, *Ezek.* 8. 16. (and I think he does not much commend them for it,) *With their Backs toward the Temple of the Lord, and their Faces toward the Eaſt*, but they had ſome Reaſon on their ſide, for it ſeems they were Worſhipping the *Sun*.

4. Upon pain of *Phanaticiſm* to call the *Chriſtian Sabbath* by no other, but the Old *Heathenish* Name of *Sunday*, and accordingly to make a *Heatheniſh* an uſe of it: to ſcruple no Viſits, Journeys, Diverſions, *&c.* but to end it at Noon; for a *Sabbatarian* ('tis well known) is of all others the Rankeſt Phanatick. I ſuppoſe 'twas in the Strength of this Church-Principle, that ſome great Patriots and Pillars of the Church (whom I happen'd lately to over-hear comparing Notes) had been late at a Tavern on a *Sunday-night* in cloſe Conſult, for Securing the Church; and by good

od Token, one of them went away without ying the Reckoning.

5. Of late, to vilifie the Memory of King *illiam*, and throw all the Dirt upon Him they n, (of which I have, to my ſorrow, too abun- nt proof) yet I take him to be the beſt Friend e Church of *England* has had for at leaſt fifty ears before; perhaps, ſince the Conqueſt: Not- ithſtanding that Perilous Innovation, not in the *urch*, but in His own *Chappel*, (as ſure *He might what He would in His Own*) of having the *Li- y*, and other Prayers, rather *ſaid* than *ſung*: or I defie Malice it ſelf to prove any other Inva- n or Encroachment upon the *Church*, againſt im.

6. What I know not well whether it be a *vil* or *Sacred Teſt*, (a Sacred it ſhould be by ing conſtantly uncovered at it); and whether requires *Conſtant* or but *Occaſional Conformity*, I ve to the Learned; To drink the *Church's alth*: And I ſuppoſe the Rule is, as in other aſes, Fill as ye love Her; and She ſays, as nt. 5.1. *O Friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly.* ow I muſt confeſs, this is no Rigid *Teſt*, if the quor be good; nay, I'll grant 'tis a pleaſant, d agreeable, but in my Mind no very *Reaſo- ble* nor *Acceptable Service*: When I know the ind of *Chriſt* farther about it, I ſhall readily er my own. Now if ſuch Drink-offerings y paſs for Devotion, we need not *compaſs Sea d Land to gain Proſelytes*; for I'll undertake for ow who (put only *Tavern* for *Temple*) ſhall e with *Holy Anna* for Perſeverance, and like

her never *depart* from their Devotions, but sti
to them *Night and Day.*

Now 'twould be fair to let the World know
what part of all our Constitutions these Du
are to be found: For to Father, or rather M
ther their *Spurious* Brats on the *Church*, and
'em at her Door, who no where owns 'em
hers; and then to fall foul upon others, a
call them all to naught, for not taking them
genuine and *legitimate*, when they themselves c
not assign the *Time* or *Place* of their *Birth*,
shew so much as their *Names* in the *Church-Re*
ster; this appears to me the very heighth of *Ar*
rary Power and Injustice.

Now I don't think my self bound to rega
every new Whim, at least 'till the *Publick Imp*
matur be set to it: If some People advance ne
Notions of a Middle State, and Prayers for t
Dead, and others make Fine *Apostrophe's* to Sai
(which some would be ready to call Praye
and then to bring their own Conceits into vogu
cry, the *Church* the *Church*; I can't apprehe
my self bound by virtue of *Canonical Obedie*
to follow the Cry. I owe Obedience to
Lawful Superiors both in *Church* and *State*
nothing sinful be enjoin'd), but still I have
much Wit as to distinguish between *Divine* a
Humane, between *Canon* and *Canon*, that of *Scr*
ture and that of *Convocation*, and to pay the
and proper deference to each, and not give
to *Cæsar*, no, nor St. *Peter* neither, *the things*
are God's.

has been my hard Lot to be misrepresented
ate to some of our Ecclesiastical Governors,
n the *Sixth Article*, the Church's Health (tho'
very false and unfair Aggravations)
Back-friend, or a Sly Enemy to the *Church*
ugh none that know me will lay Craft or
embling to my Charge); whereas I think
self a better Friend to it than my Accusers:
ve done it some little Service, I have brought
e to a better Opinion of it, and I think I
brought any Scandal upon it: I never was
g'd, in above a dozen Years, with any the
Contempt, or Failure of Duty; I never
one Penny by't, (and, I'm perswaded, never
), nor indeed by any Party whatsoever.
I wash an *Ethiop*; for it will be reply'd, *Out*
ine own Mouth will we judge thee: This tedi-
Canting Harangue is as sure a sign of a *Pha-*
k, as *The Lord* was with *Bishop Gardiner*, *Sym-*
n Hæreticorum, the Mark of an *Heretick*.
may seem perhaps to some, in answering
Objections, not serious enough, or rather
and jocular; and that the Whole is more
a Satyr than a Sermon; but I take that Text
. 26. 5. *Answer a Fool according to his Folly,*
e be wise in his own Conceit, to be more than
nsel, even an expres *Command*. And I have
Example of *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* 18. 27. *And Eli-*
mocked them and said, Cry aloud; for he is a
either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or in a
ney, or, peradventure, he sleepeth, and must be
d. No one supposes him here to be strictly
us, or but a little satyrical; nay, 'tis perhaps,
harpest Irony, or Sarcasm rather, we ever

met with, and ſharper than *the Knives and L*
cers wherewith his Adverſaries *cut themſelves*:
we Fight not ſuch Antagoniſts with their o
Weapons there is no end, for *Scoff* and *Ban*
the whole of their Argument, and if we o
them any thing ſerious, they have a ſpeedy
ply to turn it all into *Burleſque*; tho' if we wo
uſe the utmoſt Gravity, the Subject will not b
it, and to be ſerious about a trifling Impertine
is not only abſurd, but almoſt impoſſible.

I come now to the laſt Objection, whic
purpoſely kept to bring up the Rear, becau
muſt debate with you a little upon it; and h
I ſhall be truly ſerious, (as the Subject requir
'Tis ſaid your Work ſeems at a ſtand, nay, ſo
give out, (but I hope they'll be found Ly
that there's little or nothing done now-a-days
it but hearing Reformation-Sermons. That th
is a viſible abatement of Succeſs cannot be
ny'd, unleſs we will give all our Senſes the L
and if my Eyes and Ears are my own, (and I
ſometimes look abroad in the World) things
not right, nor as they us'd to be: The two E
of the Town were always very looſe, and
afraid always will be; for when Seamen
Soldiers, Footmen and Players, begin to Refo
I ſhall be apt to conclude the World's near
end: But the City is us'd to be more Sober
Civiliz'd; I could have gone ſome while f
from the *Tower* to the *Temple* without hearing
Oath; but now they are almoſt as rife as in
Suburbs, however, much rifer than they w
Pray, Gentlemen, where muſt the Stopp
lye; for a Stoppage there is, or Wickedneſs e

so strangely and suddenly overflow? I dare look up to the Higher Powers; King *Amaziah* has taught me better Manners, 2 *Chr.* 25. *Art thou made of the King's Council? Forbear, shouldest thou be smitten?* And another *Amaziah*, (tho' not of the same Dignity) has back'd with a like Advice, *Hos.* 7. 12. *O thou Seer, flee into the Land of Judah, and there eat Bread*, &c. dangerous meddling with those above us, hope a modest Enquiry may give no Offence. As to Her Majesty, 'tis plain She has Her Part, She has sent forth Precept upon Precept, Proclamation upon Proclamation, and strictly charg'd them to be executed with Vigor. Failure in the subordinate Magistrate? God forbid. 'Tis true we have had a great and surprising Alteration made amongst them; but we must suppose for the better, and not for the worse. Or why was it made? We should always believe there are good Reasons for what our Superiors do, tho' we are not able to conceive them; *for the Heart of Kings is unsearchable.* The more therefore, Gentlemen, must lye at your Doors, and clear your selves of it as well as you can. I am afraid you are *grown weary of well-doing*, and begin to *faint in your Minds*; that you have sunk under Discouragements, and been ready to throw up your Design as desperate. But tell me, if you durst, *Is there not a Cause?* Ay, there is; and a manifest one too, if any Body had the Courage to declare it. Come, Gentlemen, to be plain with you, ye have had many valuable Sermons: But 'tis not every one that will tell you the Truth; but (God be praised

ed) I dare tell the boldeſt Truth, and that b
fore the haughtieſt Worm, or the proudeſt A
ſembly of Treacherous Men under the Sun. T
Caſe is this, (and it cannot be hid) tho' ſo
think it ſhould not be ſhèwn, but I am not
their Mind: You are foully trick'd and abus
you are fed with fair Hopes, and amus'd w
goodly Pretences, yet nothing is done nor
tended to be done in your Favour, but much
oppoſe you: In the mean while, your Mone
ſpent; your Time waſted; your Zealous End
vours ſcorn'd, hated, and ridicul'd; your
tempts baffled; your Perſons affronted, inſul
aſſaulted; your Lives threatned, and often
danger'd; and this not only conniv'd at, bu
cretly encourag'd.

Theſe, you'll ſay, are ſtrange Expreſſ
but no more ſtrange than true: And what I
ſaid, I'll ſtand to, let who dare call me to a
lick Account for't, as ſoon as they pleaſe: I
be forth-coming; and then they may hear
tle more of my mind, and more perhaps
they'll be willing to hear. I know my Co
on, and my *Call* from God to the Service o
Day; and can produce it, (if need be.) *E*
Tho' briars and thorns be with thee, and t
dwell among ſcorpions, be not afraid of thei
nor be diſmayed at their looks; tho' they be a r
houſe. And thou ſhalt ſpeak my words u
whether they will hear, or whether they will
for they are moſt rebellious. Come; God
be mock'd; and Truth muſt be ſpoken w
is concern'd; (for as to State-Matters
trouble my Head:) and ſhall be ſpoken

have a Tongue, tho' all the Devils in Hell and Incarnate conſpire to ſtifle it; nay, tho' I were ſure to be cudgell'd or *Coventry'd*, or have my Throat cut the next hour: I'll go one Step further, *thro' Chriſt who ſtrengtheneth me*; tho' I were ſure (as that *Glorious Martyr*, *Monſieur Brouſſon*, by that expreſs Image of Satan, the *King over all the Children of Pride*, that Prince of Bullies, *Hector le Grand*, (for Hectors are always both Cowards and Cruel) who would not leave one Grain of Liberty or Piety in the World:) to be broken upon the Wheel. And who knows how ſoon I may fall into his hands? For there are many amongſt us, who would ſell their Prince, their Country, their Church, their Souls, (thoſe they'd ſell for Six-pence, for they don't believe they have any) to bring his Iron Yoke upon our Necks; if it were but to be no more plagu'd with *Reformation*. Then they know Claret will be cheap, *French* Whores will abound, (which will ſink the Price) and he'll give them leave to be as wicked as they pleaſe; (which is all they want) ſo they but acknowledge his Will for Supreme, *and fall down and worſhip the Golden Image which he has ſet up*; for he is as truly worſhipp'd as any of the *Roman* Heathen Emperors. For beſides what I have often heard, that the Officers and others when they mount the Guards pay their Devoirs to His Statue, a Gentleman ſhewed me, not long ſince, an *Inſcription* taken off His Statue at *Arles*, which is as rank *Blaſphemy* as ever *Nebuchadnezzar* or *Nero* were guilty of; *Imperatoriæ Ludovici* XIV. *Majeſtati, Iconicum hoc Simulacrum, quaſi Præſens Numen ſuſpiceret,*

Civitas Arelatenſis Senatûs Conſulto publice coli juſſit: We may render it (though not exactly) thus, *To the Imperial Majeſty of* Lewis XIV. *the City of* Arles *by a Decree of Parliament, has commanded this Statue, bearing His Reſemblance, as if they lookt up to a Preſent Deity, to be publickly worſhipt.*

The World is not Blind, though through fear it be Dumb; every one ſees which way things go, though moſt think it Wiſdom to hear and ſee and ſay nothing; but our Charge runs otherwiſe, *Iſa.* 58. 1. *Cry aloud, ſpare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and ſhew my people their tranſgreſſions.* And I hope I may add in thoſe words of the Prophet *Micah,* (for Scripture may be quoted without Offence; and if it happen to hit the caſe too exactly we can't help that;) 3.8. *But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his tranſgreſſion, and to Iſrael his ſin. Hear this I pray you, ye heads of the houſe of Jacob* ----- *that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.* Who don't know how many bitter Enemies of Godlineſs, obſtinate Non-jurors, and reputed Friends of the *French,* (for that *Triple-League* between *Rome, France, and Hell; that threefold Cord,* can never be untwiſted, though I hope it *will be broken,*) are in Places of Publick Truſt; for Places of Profit only I ſhould never grudge them, ſo it be not their Power to Sell and Betray us? How many Grave, Sober, Pious Magiſtrates, Men that Feared God and Hated Sin, have been put out of Commiſſion, and their Places fill'd up with wild, debauched, hectoring Blades, who Swear, and Drink, and Game; whom when you, Gentlemen,

men, have hunted from Bowling-Green to Tavern, to give Information againſt Offenders, they ſhall Curſe you for preciſe *Phanatical Dogs*; and if you preſs the Point upon them, ſhall Cane you, or Draw upon you, or Expoſe you to the Scorn and Rage of the Rabble. There are ſome *Counties* where for many Miles round they are in the ſame State as *Laiſh*, *Judg.* 18. 7. *There was no magiſtrate in the land that might put them to ſhame in any thing*, unleſs for diſcharging their Duty to God; and for this, they will Shame them abundantly. I know where one of theſe Egregious Magiſtrates, and Bleſſed Guardians of the Peace, not long ſince rode on Horſeback Drunk into a Meeting-Houſe, and ask'd them, *What they did there Worſhipping the Devil?* But never was call'd to an Account for the Riot. I was further aſſur'd by a Perſon of Note, whom I'll name when call'd to it, That one at the Top of the Law, declared you were a *Publick Nuiſance*; a Nuſance ye are indeed, to the Devil and his Party, the greateſt they were ever plagu'd with ſince Chriſt and his Apoſtles were on Earth: and I truſt you will be a greater ſtill; but ye are unto God, 2 *Cor.* 2. 15. *a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt in them that are ſav'd, and in them that periſh.* You are at vaſt Expence to proſecute Players for their Monſtrous Prophaneneſs: but don't miſtake your ſelves, they have more Friends in Court than you; they have Counſel to Plead for them without Fee; they have the advantage of any ſlip or error in the Indictment, not only allow'd but ſhewn them too; (and perhaps he that draws it up for you may betray you;) and if they

they are Convicted (because sometimes there is no Evasion without throwing off the Vizor, and there is a time for all things,) they have enow ready to make a Purse and pay their Fine; for Fine is Penalty enough for such petty venial Crimes as Blasphemy and abominable Idolatries, in Swearing by and Adoring *Heathen Gods*, that is, *Devils*, who are as much pleas'd with this Homage as that of the Ancient *Pagans*. Those Honourable Persons must not be *Pillory'd*, 'twould spoil their Reputation; and they would not appear afterwards with a good Grace on the Stage; and so the Town would suffer in its *dearest Diversions*. Open War against *God and Christ, and good Manners*, stabs at the very Heart of Religion have no spice of Sedition, but are (I warrant) consistent with Loyalty, (and you may remember the time, if you don't, I do, when Lewdness and Loyalty were made by some the whole Duty of Man.) That Guilt and Penalty belongs to those rash unwary Zealots who have no more Wit and Manners than to tell Tales, and know more than their Betters would have them. It is not long since I had occasion to wait upon one who is now in an high Post of Justice, and I found him Drinking, and most familiarly conversing with a very Infamous *Player*; and such a Magistrate is like to be hearty in bringing Bosom-Friends to condign Punishment.

I'll say no more, for I have said enough already, till Authority shall question me for what I have said. I shall only make this short Application, and I pray remember it; for there may be Something in it, and More than every one imagines.

gines. God has been mock'd, abominably mock'd, and he has highly resented it, and shewn his Resentment: He has loudly warned us by a Voice from Heaven; *A Voice full of Terror and Majesty*, the *late dreadful and unexampled Storm*. He has been mock'd again since that; mock'd the same day, by false, feigned Pretences of Zeal for him; when all was directly levell'd against him; mock'd soon after by that *Assembly of Mockers* the Players, in their *Macbeth*, and *Tempest*. He seems to put up the Affront, and *waits, that he may be Gracious to us*; and I conceive, he may warn you once more by me, *that ye be no more Mockers, lest your Band be made strong*. But beware of the Third time; for if he speaks again, I'm afraid, he'll speak with a vengeance.

I am sensible I have said enough to bring down an Hurricane upon my own Head; and let it fall when and how it will, *my heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord*. Let what will come of it, so *Christ be magnified*; *I therein rejoyce, yea, and will rejoyce*. As for you, Gentlemen, I here acquit before the World, from being any ways privy, or consenting to my Design; for you knew me no more than the rest of the World: and I would not for all I am worth, and a Thousand times more, you or your Good Design should fare the worse on my Account. Leave me to God and my self, *for to my own Master I stand or fall*. I thank God, I am above both the Hopes and Fears of Man; and neither need nor desire any one's Countenance or Protection: *For God is my shield, and exceeding great reward*: and tho' 'tis not unlike, *that bonds and afflictions may abide*

abide me, yet I truſt I can ſay with St. *Paul*, Acts 20. 24. *None of theſe things move me; neither count I my life dear unto my ſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which I have receiv'd of the Lord Jeſus; to teſtify the goſpel of the grace of God.* I thank you for your long Patience; and now I'll diſmiſs you with that Bleſſing, which I think truly belongs to you; Heb. 13. 20. *Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that great ſhepherd of the ſheep, thro' the blood of the everlaſting covenant; make you perfect in every good work, to do his will; working in you that which is well-pleaſing in his ſight, through Jeſus Chriſt. To whom, with the Father and the Eternal Spirit, One God, and our God, be glory for ever and ever.* Amen.

FINIS.

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